A U M

That pure, great light, which is radiant; that great glory; that verily which the gods worship, by means of which the sun shines forth—that eternal divine being is perceived by devotees. His form has no parallel, no one sees him with the eye. Those who apprehend him by means of the understanding and also the mind and heart, become immortal.
—*Sanatsugatiya.*

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GIORDANO BRUNO

More than one great scholar has stated that there never was a religious founder who had *invented* a new religion, or revealed a new truth. These founders were all *transmitters*, not original teachers. They were the authors of new forms and interpretations, while the truths upon which the latter were based were as old as mankind. Selecting one of those grand verities—actualities visible only to the eye of the real Sage and Seer—out of the many orally revealed to man in the beginning, preserved and perpetuated in the *adyta* of the temples through initiation, during the MYSTERIES and by personal transmission—they revealed these truths to the masses. Thus every nation received in its turn some of the said truths, under the veil of its own local and special symbolism. Confucius is shown as saying: "I only hand on; I cannot create new things. I believe in the ancients and therefore I love them."

The writer loves them too, and therefore believes in the ancients, and the modern heirs to their Wisdom. And believing in both, she now transmits that which she has received and learnt herself to all those who will accept it.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY: *The Secret Doctrine.*

THESE words of H. P. Blavatsky, taken from the *Introductory* of the *Secret Doctrine,* contain in a few sentences the key to the great mysteries and problems of humanity. They point to the purpose and perfection of eternal evolution, the great doctrine of Cyclic Law, or *Karma;* its flower and achievement in Masters, Saviours or Sages, the perfected product of all evolution. They indicate the Source of all Life and its endless progression through all forms and grades of intelligence from the lowest to the highest; they point no less clearly to the Source of all religions and philosophies in the periodic coming among men of one or another of these Masters, who "become in all things like unto us," in order that They may impart to mankind some one or more of the truths which to

Them are *actualities,* under the veil of symbolism and parable. Whatever the forms and interpretations, the truths conveyed are the same statements of the eternal verities; transmissions, a "handing on of that which was known before," not inventions of the authors, for They all belong to one Body and They all possess a single Doctrine.

Probably the oldest authentic scripture in the world, judged from the standpoint of unbroken and unpolluted transmission from generation to generation, and the unbroken reverence in which it has been held by successive myriads of people, is the *Bhagavad-Gita* of ancient India. In the Fourth chapter of that teaching, Krishna, the transmitter of that day, now more than fifty centuries gone by, says to his disciple:

> This exhaustless Doctrine I formerly taught unto Vivaswat; Vivaswat communicated it unto Manu and Manu made it known unto Ikshwaku; and being thus transmitted from one unto another it was studied by the Rajarshees, until at length in the course of time the mighty art was lost. It is even the same exhaustless, secret, eternal doctrine I have this day communicated unto thee *because thou art my devotee and my friend.*

Here we find the identical expression of facts contained in the words of H. P. B. which we have quoted, and they may be verified by any student to any extent that he desires by pondering the meaning of the facts and traditions of human history.

Though Krishna speaks of the Doctrine as becoming lost in the course of time, he can mean only that it becomes lost to humanity. It was not lost to Krishna, or other Masters, or otherwise he and They could not communicate it to those who love and believe in Them. And H. P. B. goes on to say, after the statement that these truths were *orally* revealed to man in the beginning and preserved and perpetuated in the *adyta* of the Mysteries, through initiation and by personal transmission, and after the statement that they are again and again restored and revealed to the masses by Transmitters—she goes on to say *how* they become lost to humanity:

> These truths, as time went on, developed into a more or less philosophical cultus, a Pantheon in mythical guise.

This is but repeating in her own words what Krishna said so many centuries earlier, and what any one who looks can see for himself has taken place in the case of every great religion of all times; just as any one who studies the facts can see that all these religions and philosophies are identical and in agreement fundamentally, whether as to teachings, mode or manner of inculcation on the part of the Founders; however they later, "in the course of time," became hidden and concealed under the misleading guise of a philosophical cultus or the Pantheon of sects and dogmas of established creeds.

Further, the words of H. P. B. convey, to those who can see the meanings of words and facts, the revelation of the true nature of H. P. BLAVATSKY as one of those very Transmitters, Sages, Seers or Initiates of whom she speaks, and point to her as one of the long, long line of Those 'who walk in the footsteps of the Prede-

cessors." But to see this one must have not merely studied for information's sake, nor even with an eye to see the meaning of things: one must "believe in the ancients and love them," as Confucius did, and as she did; and one must have towards Her and her Mission the same attitude that Krishna says has enabled him to *communicate* this Doctrine to Arjuna, though to others it was lost: "*Because thou art my devotee and my friend.*" To all others there is no real *communication* of the Secret Doctrine; it merely becomes to them in the course of time a philosophical cultus or one more in the pantheon of creeds.

Once a century, in the West, said H. P. B., Transmitters have come and will continue to come. She said the Next Messenger of the Great MASTERS would not come until 1975, and those who are Her devotees and Her friends, are working and will continue to work, inspired by Her communication and by Her example, to "preach, promulgate and practice" the philosophy She transmitted until the next Messenger shall come. It may some part help us in that devotion to consider from time to time the identity of aim, purpose and teaching of earlier Messengers from the same great Source of inspiration and effort.

One such was Giordano Bruno, born about 1548 and departing in "fire, light, day, the fortnight of the waxing moon, six months of the sun's northern course," for he was burned at the stake by the Inquisition on the seventeenth February, 1600, at Rome. Martyrdom, in one form or another, is the price paid by all those who seek to restore to humanity that which was lost.

Of Bruno's life little is known; almost as little as of the life of Christ or of Apollonius of Tyana. He was born in Italy. He entered in youth the order of the Dominicans. He went to Geneva, to France, to England, to Wittenberg, to Prague, and thence back to Italy to meet his fate, his mission having been accomplished.

In the sordid, sensual, savage civil, social and religious generation in which his work was done he could be but little more than "the witness on the scene." But he held high the torch of truth to "all those who would accept it," and his philosophy and high courage had a profound, though even yet but scantly recognized, influence in and on scholasticism, science, philosophy and religion, and blazed some part of the obstacles from the path of the Renaissance of human liberty of thought in the following century, even though that liberty degenerated into the deadly licenses of intellectual atheism and sectarian superstitions.

In his successive locations he visited, talked, lectured and wrote in the then centres of Calvinism, Lutheranism, and the other protestant rebellions against the devilish hierarchy which in the name of Jesus and the Christ sat astride the conscience and the mind of Christendom, and enforced the mandates of the Vice-Gerent of God on earth by dungeon, rack and stake.

More than this, he turned again the attention of those who in secret longed and looked for some reconciliation of God and Na-

ture, to the presentations of the Wisdom-Religion embodied and preserved in the teachings of Pythagoras, of Plato, of the Neoplatonists of the Alexandrian School—teachings then more distantly removed, because buried completely out of sight, than are the suns and planets of space from our astronomers. He taught them something better than the stones and chaff of Aristotle and the bones of empiricism of the Peripatetics. He defended the Copernican discoveries and deductions. He taught them to look for themselves at the nobility of the Universe, with eyes unclouded by the mists of authoritative philosophies or the smoke of Church superstition and faggots. He put the little Jewish miracles and the snuffy pretenses of the orthodox saints on the same level with the myths of all creeds. He taught that judgment is the high principle of all progress, not their belief in this or that catechism. He proclaimed Intelligent Law as the supreme Governing Power, and that the sole end and aim of all "is the good of mankind," which is but another way of saying that nature exists for the Soul's sake, and that down to the smallest atom all is soul and spirit ever evolving under the rule of law inherent in the whole. He denied "particular providences," boldly affirmed the uselessness of prayer, showed the Unity of Free-will and Necessarianism—another way of affirming the sway of *Karma*—and taught that in Man, reason is the apprehension of Law, law the manifestation of Wisdom, and wisdom the comprehension of both *liberty of action* and *necessity of law;* the third and second fundamental propositions of the *Secret Doctrine.*

Consciously as well as unconsciously Descartes, Spinoza and Leibnitz, who gained wide hearings for their philosophical and speculative studies and teachings, were indebted to Bruno for their fundamental principles and ideas, and these have in their turn affected and influenced the minds of myriads who could not otherwise have been helped to any intellectual or ethical growth in perception. For we have to remember that though a single sun illuminates the whole earth and makes possible all growth upon it, yet its rays do not strike upon all alike, nor are all growths beneficent or normal. This is not from any partiality of the sun's shining, for "it shines on all alike," but rather because of the differences of seeds, of soil, of distance, and of zone, or inclination toward or from the direct rays —which again, are all but modes and processes of the operations of *Karma.*

After this preliminary "survey of arms and of armies"—to quote again from the ancient and honorable words of the *Bhagavad-Gita*—we may consider the actual beliefs and teachings of Bruno, chiefly in his own words as these have come down to us from his "Confession" before the Inquisition, as well as from the "Accusation" which Mocenigo made "by order of his confessor."

Bruno's and Spinoza's doctrines are nearly identical, though the words of the latter are more veiled, and far more cautiously chosen than those of the author of the *Causa Principio et Uno.* Both Bruno who confesses that the source of his inspiration was Pythagoras, and Spinoza, who, without acknowledging it as frank-

ly, allows his philosophy to betray the secret, view the First Cause from the same standpoint. With them, God is an entity totally *per se*, an Infinite Spirit. As well as the Hindu *Swabhavikas*, erroneously called Atheists, Spinoza and Bruno were led to the conclusion that *God is to be sought for within nature and not without.*

We can leave Spinoza out of the question, and even allow him to remain in the eyes of his critics an utter atheist and materialist; for the cautious reserve which he placed upon himself in his writings makes it extremely difficult for one who does not read him between the lines, and is not thoroughly acquainted with the hidden meaning of the Pythagorean metaphysics, to ascertain what his real sentiments were. But as for Giordano Bruno, if he adhered to the doctrines of Pythagoras he must have believed in another life, hence, he could not have been an atheist whose philosophy offered him no such "consolation," as Professor Draper thinks, who thereby betrays a very superficial knowledge of the true belief of the philosophers. Bruno's accusation and subsequent confession, as given by Professor Domenico Berti, in his *Life of Bruno*, and compiled from original documents since published, prove beyond doubt what were his *real* philosophy, creed and doctrines. In common with the Alexandrian Platonists, and the later Kabalists, he held that Jesus was a magician in the sense given to this appellation by Porphyry and Cicero, who call it the *divina sapientia* (divine knowledge), a term identical in significance with the Sanskrit *Gupta Vidya*, or Secret Doctrine of the Initiates of all ages. The Magi are described by Philo Judaeus as the most wonderful inquirers into the hidden mysteries of nature, not in the degrading sense given to the word magic in our century. In his noble conception, *the Magi were holy men, who, setting themselves apart from everything else on this earth, contemplated the divine virtues and understood the divine nature of the gods and spirits, and more clearly; and so, initiated others into the same mysteries, which consist in one holding an uninterrupted intercourse with these invisible beings during life.*

But we will show Bruno's inmost philosophical convictions better by quoting fragments from the *accusation* and his *own confession.*

The charges in the denunciation of Mocenigo, his accuser, are expressed in the following terms:

"I, Zuane Mocenigo, son of the most illustrious Ser Marcantonio, denounce to your very reverend fathership, by constraint of my conscience and by order of my confessor, that I have heard say by Giordano Bruno, several times when he discoursed with me in my house, that it is a great blasphemy in Catholics to say that the bread transubstantiates itself into flesh; that he is opposed to the Mass; that no religion pleases him; that Christ was a wretch (*un tristo*), and that if he did wicked works to seduce the people he might well predict that He ought to be impaled; that there is no distinction of persons in God, and that it would be an imperfection in God; that the world is eternal, and that there are infinite worlds,

and that God makes them continually, because, he says, He desires all He can; that Christ did apparent miracles and was a *magician,* and so were the apostles, and that he had a mind to do as much and more than they did; that Christ showed an unwillingness to die, and shunned death all He could; that there is no punishment of sin, and that souls created by the operation of nature pass from one animal to another, and that as the brute animals are born of corruption, so also are men when after dissolution they come to be born again."

Perfidious as they are, the above words plainly indicate the belief of Bruno in the Pythagorean metempsychosis, which, misunderstood as it is, still shows a belief in the *survival* of man in one shape or another. Further, the accuser says:

"He has shown indications of wishing to make himself the author of a new sect, under the name of '*New Philosophy.*' He has said that the Virgin could not have brought forth, and that our Catholic faith is full of blasphemies against the majesty of God; that the monks ought to be deprived of the right of disputation and their revenues, because they pollute the world; that they are all asses; that we have no proof that our faith has merit with God, and that not to do to others what we would not have done to ourselves suffices for a good life, and that he laughs at all other sins, and wonders how God can endure so many heresies in Catholics. He says that he means to apply himself to the art of divination, and make all the world run after him; that St. Thomas and all the Doctors knew nothing to compare with him, and that he could ask questions of all the first theologians of the world that they could not answer."

To this, the accused philosopher answered by the following *profession of faith, which is that of every disciple of the ancient Masters*:

"I hold, in brief, to an infinite universe, that is, an effect of infinite divine power, because I esteemed it a thing unworthy of divine goodness and power, that, being able to produce besides this world another and infinite others, it should produce a finite world. Thus I have declared that there are infinite particular worlds similar to this of the earth, which, with Pythagoras, I understand to be a star similar in nature with the moon, the other planets, and the other stars, which are infinite; and that all those bodies are worlds, and without number, which thus constitute the infinite universality in an infinite space, and this is called the infinite universe, in which are innumerable worlds, so that there is a double kind of infinite greatness in the universe, and of a multitude of worlds. Indirectly, this may be understood to be repugnant to the truth according to the true faith.

"Moreover, I place in this universe a universal Providence, by virtue of which everything lives, vegetates and moves, and stands in its perfection, and I understand it in two ways; one, in the mode in which the whole soul is present in the whole and every part of the

body, and this I call nature, the shadow and footprint of divinity; the other, the ineffable mode in which God, by essence, presence, and power, is in all and above all, not as part, not as soul, but in mode inexplicable.

"Moreover, I understand all the attributes in divinity to be one and the same thing. Together with the theologians and great philosophers, I apprehend three attributes, power, wisdom, and goodness, or, rather, mind, intellect, love, with which things have first, being, through the mind; next, ordered and distinct being, through the intellect; and third, concord and symmetry, through love. Thus I understand being in all and over all, as there is nothing without participation in being, and there is no being without essence, just as nothing is beautiful without beauty being present; thus nothing can be free from the divine presence, and thus by way of reason, and not by way of substantial truth, do I understand distinction in divinity.

"Assuming then the world caused and produced, I understand that, according to all its being, it is dependent upon the First Cause, so that it did not reject the name of creation, which I understand that Aristotle also has expressed, saying, 'God is that upon whom the world and all nature depends,' so that according to the explanation of St. Thomas, whether it be eternal or in time, it is, according to all its being, dependent on the First Cause, and nothing in it is independent.

"Next, in regard to what belongs to the true faith, not speaking philosophically, to come to individuality about the divine persons, the wisdom and the son of the mind, called by philosophers intellect, and by theologians the word, which ought to be believed to have taken on human flesh. But I, abiding in the phrases of philosophy, have not understood it, but have doubted and held it with inconstant faith, not that I remember to have shown marks of it in writing nor in speech, except indirectly from other things, something of it may be gathered as by way of ingenuity and profession in regard to what may be proved by reason and concluded from natural light. Thus, in regard to the Holy Spirit in a third person, I have not been able to comprehend, as ought to be believed, but, according to the Pythagoric manner, in conformity to the manner shown by Solomon, I have understood it as the soul of the universe, or adjoined to the universe according to the saying of the wisdom of Solomon: 'The spirit of God filleth all the earth, and that which contains all things,' all of which conform equally to the Pythagorean doctrine explained by Virgil in the text of the *Æneid:*

> Principio coelum ac terras camposque liquentes, Lucentemque globum Lunae, Titaniaque astra Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus Mens agitat molem;*

and the lines following.

* Heaven and Earth, and the watery plains, and the Moon's lucid ball, and Titan's starry fires are kept alive by a spirit within: a mind pervading each limb stirs the whole frame and mingles with the mighty mass.

"From this spirit, then, which is called the life of the universe. I understand, in my philosophy, proceeds life and soul, which, moreover, I understand to be immortal, as also to bodies, which, as to their substance, are all immortal, there being no other death than division and congregation, which doctrine seems expressed in *Ecclesiastes*, where it is said that 'there is nothing new under the sun; that which is is that which was.'"

Furthermore, Bruno confesses his inability to comprehend the doctrine of three persons in the godhead, and his doubts of the incarnation of God in Jesus, but firmly pronounces his belief in the *miracles* of Christ. How could he, being a Pythagorean philosopher, discredit them? If, under the merciless constraint of the Inquisition, he, like Galileo, subsequently recanted, and threw himself upon the clemency of his ecclesiastical persecutors, we must remember that he spoke like a man standing between the rack and the faggot, and human nature cannot always be heroic when the corporeal frame is debilitated by torture and imprisonment.

For Bruno lay for seven long years in the dungeons of the Inquisition before the final *consummatum est* of his martyrdom, and it requires but little knowledge of the terrible methods used upon its prisoners by that incarnation of Black Magic to understand that the Soul of Bruno gave what mercy it could to the tortured personality upon which alone the Inquisition could bring to bear its horrid refinements of savagery.

Bruno was the contemporary in part of Robert Fludd, the English Theosophist, and of Jakob Boehme or Behmen, the German mystic, both of whom were born in 1575, and were at the maturation of their natures before Bruno expired in the midst of the flames. Their teachings were identical with those of Bruno, however differently veiled in symbolism and language, and however different their environment. For Fludd was by profession a physician and Boehme by occupation a shoemaker. All three influenced powerfully the most enlightened minds of their own and succeeding generations. Since nature and man are both a trinity of the mystic principles of Spirit, Soul and Mind, the "three qualities" of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and the "essence, presence, and power" of Giordano Bruno, who can say but that this same Trinity should have its mystic influx among mankind in the periodic appearance of Three Messengers of the Great Lodge of Masters, recognized or unrecognized. And some think that Bruno, Fludd and Behmen were the three Agents of their century.

If one asks, How can it be known that there is a Lodge of Masters, or even Masters; that They periodically incarnate among men; that their unbroken continuity can be followed through the closing years of every Western century; that They can be recognized? it may in one way be answered by a consideration, not of their garments of body, speech, or environment, nor yet by what this one or that one, friend or foe, follower or critic, says of them,

but by regarding closely the *identity* of Nature's processes, rather than the processes; the purposiveness and law underlying and uniting all of nature however infinite her artifices and modes and varieties; and the corresponding and analogous identity of aim, purpose and teaching of those who bring us the keys to Nature's mysteries, and the fate that befalls them. In other words: by the consideration that we may know the Messenger by the Message, and the Message by its light upon ourselves and upon all nature.

On the scene of Bruno's martyrdom there was erected in 1889, three centuries later, a monument to this brave, devoted and loyal friend "of that great orphan—Humanity." And to the lasting honor of Robert G. Ingersoll, iconoclast and foe of religious bigotry and superstition, and ceaseless warrior for the liberty of thought and conscience for all men, be it remembered that he aided mightily in America, both in the procuring of funds for Bruno's monument and in arousing a world-opinion that overcame the fierce opposition of Romanism to this mark of belated recognition. But a better, truer, and nobler monument is the recognition in our hearts that had it not been for the deathless and death-defying devotion of Giordano Bruno and others like him, we of to-day could not have nor hold that freedom of thought, opinion and expression which is ours to enjoy, to use or abuse, according as we have or have not absorbed the "mind, intellect, love," for which Bruno lived and for which he gave his life.

SECRET DOCTRINE EXTRACTS*

The star under which a human Entity is born, says the Occult teaching, will remain for ever its star, throughout the whole cycle of its incarnations in one Manvantara. But *this is not his astrological star.* The latter is concerned and connected with the *personality,* the former with the INDIVIDUALITY. The "Angel" of that Star, or the Dhyani-Buddha will be either the guiding or simply the presiding "Angel," so to say, in every new rebirth of the monad, *which is part of his own essence,* though his vehicle, man, may remain for ever ignorant of this fact. The adepts have each their Dhyani-Buddha, their elder "twin Soul," and they know it, calling it "Father-Soul," and "Father-Fire." It is only at the last and supreme initiation, however, that they learn it when placed face to face with the bright "Image." How much has Bulwer Lytton known of this mystic fact when describing, in one of his highest inspirational moods, Zanoni face to face with his *Augoeides?*

* From the Original Edition Vol. I, pp. 572 573; see Vol. I, p. 626 Third Edition.

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM*[1]

STUDENT. What is Occultism?

Sage. It is that branch of knowledge which shows the universe in the form of an egg. The cell of science is a little copy of the egg of the universe. The laws which govern the whole govern also every part of it. As man is a little copy of the universe —is the microcosm—he is governed by the same laws which rule the greater. Occultism teaches therefore of the secret laws and forces of the universe and man, those forces playing in the outer world and known in part only by the men of the day who admit no invisible real nature behind which is the model of the visible.

Student. What does Occultism teach in regard to man, broadly speaking?

Sage. That he is the highest product of evolution, and hence has in him a centre or focus corresponding to each centre of force or power in the universe. He therefore has as many centres or foci for force, power, and knowledge as there are such in the greater world about and within.

Student. Do you mean to include also the ordinary run of men, or is it the exceptions you refer to?

Sage. I include every human being, and that will reach from the lowest to the very highest, both those we know and those beyond us who are suspected as being in existence. Although we are accustomed to confine the term "human" to this earth, it is not correct to confine that sort of being to this plane or globe, because other planets have beings the same as ours in essential power and nature and possibility.

Student. Please explain a little more particularly what you mean by our having centres or foci in us.

Sage. Electricity is a most powerful force not fully known to modern science, yet used very much. The nervous, physical, and mental systems of man acting together are able to produce the same force exactly, and in a finer as well as subtler way and to as great a degree as the most powerful dynamo, so that the force might be used to kill, to alter, to move, or otherwise change any object or condition. This is the "vril" described by Bulwer Lytton in his *Coming Race.*

Nature exhibits to our eyes the power of drawing into one place with fixed limits any amount of material so as to produce the smallest natural object or the very largest. Out of the air she takes what is already there, and by compressing it into the limits of tree or animal form makes it visible to our material eyes. This is the power of condensing into what may be known as the ideal limits, that is, into the limits of the form which is ideal. Man has this

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* This article was first printed in *The Path* by Wm. Q. Judge, October, 1894.

[1] See *Path* v. 3, pp. 17, 54, 94, 125, 164, ,187, 219, for former articles under this title. [Reprinted in THEOSOPHY, Vol. 1, pp. 374, 406, 476, 515; Vol. 2, pp. 41, 78, 135.—Editors THEOSOPHY.]

same power, and can, when he knows the laws and the proper centres of force in himself, do precisely what Nature does. He can thus make visible and material what was before ideal and invisible by filling the ideal form with the matter condensed from the air. In his case the only difference from Nature is that he does quickly what she brings about slowly.

Among natural phenomena there is no present illustration of telepathy good for our use. Among the birds and the beasts, however, there is telepathy instinctually performed. But telepathy, as it is now called, is the communicating of thought or idea from mind to mind. This is a natural power, and being well-understood may be used by one mind to convey to another, no matter how far away or what be the intervening obstacle, any idea or thought. In natural things we can take for that the vibration of the chord which can cause all other chords of the same length to vibrate similarly. This is a branch of Occultism, a part of which is known to the modern investigator. But it is also one of the most useful and one of the greatest powers we have. To make it of service many things have to combine. While it is used every day in common life in the average way—for men are each moment telepathically communicating with each other—to do it in perfection, that is, against obstacle and distance, is perfection of occult art. Yet it will be known one day even to the common world.

Student. Is there any object had in view by Nature which man should also hold before him?

Sage. Nature ever works to turn the inorganic or the lifeless or the non-intelligent and non-conscious into the organic, the intelligent, the conscious; and this should be the aim of man also. In her great movements Nature seems to cause destruction, but that is only for the purpose of construction. The rocks are dissolved into earth, elements combine to bring on change, but there is the ever onward march of progress in evolution. Nature is not destructive of either thing or time, she is constructive. Man should be the same. And as a free moral agent he should work to that end, and not to procuring gratification merely nor for waste in any department.

Student. Is Occultism of truth or of falsehood; is it selfish or unselfish; or is it part one and part the other?

Sage. Occultism is colorless, and only when used by man for the one side or the other is it good or bad. Bad Occultism, or that which is used for selfish ends, is not false, for it is the same as that which is for good ends. Nature is two-sided, negative and positive. good and bad, light and dark, hot and cold, spirit and matter. The Black magician is as powerful in the matter of phenomena as the White, but in the end all the trend of Nature will go to destroy the black and save the white. But what you should understand is that the false man and the true can both be occultists. The words of the Christian teacher Jesus will give the rule for judgment: "By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns

or figs of thistles?" Occultism is the general, all-inclusive term, the differentiating terms are White and Black; the same forces are used by both, and similar laws, for there are no special laws in this universe for any special set of workers in Nature's secrets. But the path of the untruthful and the wicked, while seemingly easy at first, is hard at last, for the black workers are the friends of no one, they are each against the other as soon as interest demands, and that may be anytime. It is said that final annihilation of the personal soul awaits those who deal in the destructive side of Nature's hall of experience.

Student. Where should I look for the help I need in the right life, the right study?

Sage. Within yourself is the light that lighteth every man who cometh here. The light of the Higher Self and of the Mahâtma are not different from each other. Unless you find your Self, how can you understand Nature?

DO THE RISHIS EXIST?*

FOLLOWING the example of the Parsi Gentleman whose letter you published in the *Theosophist* of January 1882, I am induced to enquire if there are Hindu Mahatmas among the Himalayan BROTHERS. By the term Hindu, I mean a believer in Vedas and the Gods they describe. If there are none, will any Brother of the 1st Section[1] be so kind as to enlighten the Hindu Community in general and the Hindu Theosophists in particular whether any Hindu Rishis of old still exist in flesh and blood? The adept Himalayan BROTHERS having explored the unseen universe must necessarily know the Rishis if they exist now. Tradition says that particularly the following seven are immortal, at least for the present kalpa.

Ashwathama, Bali, Vyasa, Hanuman, Vibhisana, Kripa, Parasuram.

A HINDU THEOSOPHIST.

Editor's Note:—In reply to the first question we are happy to inform our correspondent that there are Mahatmas among the Himalayan Brothers who are Hindus—*i. e.*, born of Hindu and Brahmin parents and who recognize the *esoteric* meaning of the Vedas and the Upanishads. They agree with Krishna, Buddha, Vyasa, Suka, Goudapatha and Sankaracharya in considering that the *Karma kanda* of the Vedas is of no importance whatsoever so far as man's spiritual progress is concerned. Our questioner will do well to remember in this connection Krishna's celebrated advice to Arjuna. "The subject matter of the Vedas is related to the three Gunas; oh Arjuna, divest thyself of these gunas". Sankaracharya's uncompromising attitude towards Purwamimansa is too well known to require any special mention here.

* This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist* for March, 1883.

[1] No chela need answer this, except the editor. A. H. T.

Although the Himalayan Brothers admit the esoteric meaning of the Vedas and the Upanishads, they refuse to recognize as Gods, the powers and other spiritual entities mentioned in the Vedas. The language used in the Vedas is allegorical and this fact has been fully recognized by some of the greatest Indian Philosophers. Our correspondent will have to prove that the Vedas really "describe *Gods*" as they exist, before he can fairly ask us to declare whether our Masters believe in such gods. We very much doubt if our correspondent is really prepared to contend seriously, that *Agni* has four horns, three legs, two heads, five hands and seven tongues as he is stated to possess in the Vedas; or that Indra committed adultery with Goutama's wife. We beg to refer our learned correspondent to Kulluka Bhatta's explanation of the latter myth (and it is a mere myth in his opinion) and Patanjali's remarks on the profound esoteric significance of the four horns of Agni, in support of our assertion that the Vedas do not in reality describe any gods as our questioner has supposed.

In reply to the second question we are not prepared to say that "any Hindu Rishis of old still exist in flesh and blood" although we have our own reasons to believe that some of the great Hindu Adepts of ancient times have been and are reincarnating themselves occasionally in Tibet and Tartary; nor is it at all easy for us to understand how it can ever reasonably be expected that our Himalayan Brothers should discover Hindu Rishis "in flesh and blood" in their explorations in the "Unseen Universe," since "astral" bodies are not usually made up of those earthly materials.

The tradition alluded to by our correspondent is not literally true; then, what connection is there between the seven personages named and the Hindu Rishis? Though we are not called upon to give an explanation of the tradition in question from our own standpoint, we shall give a few hints which may enable our readers to ascertain its real significance from what is contained in Ramayana and Maha Charata.

Aswathama has gained an *imortality of infamy*.

Parasurama's cruelty made him immortal but he is not supposed to live in flesh and blood now; he is generally stated to have some sort of existence in fire though not necessarily in what a Christian would call "hell."

Bali is not an individual properly speaking. The principle denoted by the name will be known when the esoteric meaning of *Thrivikrama Avatar* is better comprehended.

Vyasa is *immortal in his incarnations*. Let our respected Brother count how many Vyasas there have been from first to last.

Hanuman was neither a human being nor a monkey: it is one of the powers of the 7th principle of man (Rama).

Vibhisana. Not a Rakshasa really but the personification of *Satwaguna* which is immortal.

Kripa's association with Aswathama will explain the nature of his immortality.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

At the meetings of The United Lodge of Theosophists a part of the time is devoted to Question and Answer. The questions and answers that follow were taken stenographically while "The Ocean of Theosophy," by Wm. Q. Judge, was being studied.

It should be remembered that while the answers are given from the standpoint of many years' experience and application, they are not to be taken as hard and fast definitions, nor as authoritative; but may be used as explanations and applications of the philosophy of Theosophy as related to the particular phases presented in the various questions. Each student, being "the final authority" for himself, should not accept any statement by any being whatever unless he himself perceives its truth.

Beginning with Chapter I of the "Ocean," the succeeding chapters will be taken up seriatim.

CHAPTER II.

Q. What does it mean on page 14 when it says "until all the units of the race which are ready are perfected"?

A. If we have understood that "all is soul and spirit ever evolving", every form that exists is the embodiment of an acquired intelligence. Before our earth began there were present all the beings of every grade who had reached their various stages of development on the previous "earth". Among those beings would be some who had reached a stage of spiritual development and perfection of knowledge of the evolutionary stream from which they had emerged; such beings would pass out of the system to higher planes or worlds perhaps; whereas those who had not reached that stage would have to continue with beings like themselves and all others below them (who in their totality constitute the earth—or field of experience) until they in their turn had reached the highest point. Evidently those who had so far progressed as to reach the highest stage "were ready". One would not expect the incipient human units which emerged from the animal kingdom when the period of the preceding planet had closed to have had the same experience as those who were self-conscious when that preceding earth began. There are always those who pass out of any system through advancement in knowledge and wisdom, and those who remain to perfect their experience, while still others come up from the kingdoms below.

Q. Do not all the Egos of this Manvantara have to be ready before we leave this earth?

A. As before said, there are beings at the end of every pralaya and before re-manifestation who have progressed far enough to pass out of that system; this implies that they have performed their whole duty towards the particular evolution from which they emerge. It would be natural to suppose that when there are others in any system who arise to the place held by the highest units, the latter should move on to wider fields in a higher system. The conclusion would be that all the Egos do not "have to be" perfected. An Ego is self-conscious, and must progress by self-induced and

self-devised efforts; the period of earth manifestation might close before perfection was reached, and likely will for most.

Q. Then this earth will last until there is none here to use it?

A. It will last as long as there is a Man to need it. The period of the earth's duration is greater than that of any entity or race upon it. The Moon still exists although decaying, while Man, whose habitation it was, has now the present earth as his field.

Q. "The universe evolves from the unknown, into which no man or mind, however high, can inquire, on seven planes or in seven ways or methods". Will you state the meaning of the "seven ways"?

A. Theosophy shows that all evolution is septenary in its nature and processes; it is the understanding of this septenary nature that gives us the key to a comprehension of the evolutionary processes, the nature of Man, and of all beings and forms. All planets, as well as all solar systems, have a beginning and an ending, and all of them are the products of progressive intelligences of innumerable degrees of development. Our earth is the resultant of a previous earth and its beings, whereon the course of septenary evolution had reached the limit of its possibility. Each septenary evolution has as a starting point all the knowledge and experience gained in previous evolutions, and of necessity in the succeeding evolution proceeds in a septenary manner, method, or way. As examples we have the seven "globes" of the earth; seven principles; seven great races of men; seven sub-races of each; seven sounds; seven colors, etc. (See S. D. Vol. I, pp. 289-292, Original Edition; pp. 309, 310, 311, Third Edition.)

Q. When a being is perfected on this earth, does he begin at the bottom on a higher sphere?

A. When a being is perfected he is at the top. It should be borne in mind that evolution does not begin at the bottom, but at the top always. The process is one of the action of intelligence gradually working downwards in more and more concrete productions and expressions. When the lowest point has been reached all that has been gained there in experience and knowledge is raised up one step of the "stairway of descent", is then fully assimilated there, then raised to the next highest step, and so on up to the "top" which forms the basis for the next evolutionary effort.

Q. The chapter speaks of the seven-fold divisions of the Universe as being "The Absolute, Spirit, Mind, Matter, Will, Akasa or Ether, and Life"; can their relation to each other be defined?

A. The Absolute is the Causeless Cause, the Root and Sustainer of All. Spirit, represents consciousness or intelligence arising from and within the Absolute. Mind is the intelligence of all beings in action—the creative or constructive power. Matter is substance, from the most ethereal to the most concrete: *products* of the interaction and inter-relation of the various classes of beings involved. Will is the *force* of any and all degrees of intelligence; it is inherent in consciousness as "the power to act"; determination

to act makes it operative. Akasa is an element, a form of substance, a production of the creative intelligences. Life, is the power to perceive, and to give expression, of any degree of intelligence, upon any plane of substance.

Q. Why is it impossible for the mind of man to understand the Absolute? That does not mean that we can never understand it, does it?

A. The Ocean says, "The universe evolves from the unknown, into which *no man, or mind, however high, can inquire.*" The statement stands as one made by a Teacher and should have full consideration. Nevertheless, we should be able to understand why it is correct. The Absolute is the opposite of the Relative; the Absolute includes all things and all beings, and being the substratum of all, past, present or future, cannot be inquired into by any being who exists *in* It, not *from* It.

The word Absolute denotes that which is without qualities or attributes of any kind, therefore how can any being understand That which has no form and exhibits no qualities whatever?

We are familiar with the word Life, and can understand that it is expressed in all forms whether visible or invisible to us; we use the term "the One Life" to indicate Its presence in all things and everywhere. As beings, we cannot inquire into that power of infinite expression which *each one is;* each can only express It according to his range and quality of expression. No being can express Life, without being *in essence* Life Itself.

We can say of the Absolute only that "It is", as we can say of ourselves only, "I am". How can we inquire into That which does not depend upon any expressions great or small, but upon the fact of *Its Universal Presence?*

We should also be able to perceive and understand that each one of us is both Being and Non-Being; our power to perceive is Non-Being; our assimilated and embodied perceptions constitute Being.

The Absolute is a name for the One Reality, the Infinite, Unchanging basis of All. All the rest is "Maya"—that is, the ever-changing modes, expressions, degrees of intelligence and their forms, ever approaching the Light, but never touching the Flame; for the Real in each being *is the Flame itself.*

Q. "The first differentiation—speaking metaphysically as to time—is Spirit". What does "metaphysically as to time" mean?

A. Time can only be reckoned by action and reaction, and until there is action there is no time. Before there can be action there must be those beings who are in pralaya awaiting the dawn of the new Day of manifestation. Spirit is the emergence from inactivity into activity of the intelligences; from the first "action" Time begins. (See Stanza I, S. D. Vol. I.)

Q. What is meant by "real matter"?

A. The Wisdom-Religion teaches that Spirit and Matter are without beginning; in other words, there exists together with Spirit

or Consciousness, homogeneous substance—primordial matter. It is from this primordial substance that all subsequent states of matter are produced by the action of the mass of beings involved. This homogeneous primordial substance is what is called "real matter".

Q. Why is our terrestrial plane of matter of so much importance?

A. Because we are at the bottom of the arc of descent, and at that point where Spirit, or Consciousness, and concrete Matter meet. It is the turning point where all past efforts and adjustments of the downward cycle from homogeneity to heterogeneity meet and have their field of rectification and co-ordination. We cannot avoid these adjustments; the work must be done before we can go forward. In the struggle there is but one place of calmness and steadiness—the unmoved and unchanging Self—the Higher Self of each who is the real Warrior, and Who from his innermost seat of wisdom must be free to conduct the battle, the lower self being but His soldier in the field.

Q. What is meant by the words "The plan was laid down in Universal Mind"?

A. "Universal Mind" includes all the various kinds of intelligence that were evolved in a previous planet or solar system. When manifestation ceased, each unit of intelligence had reached its own particular degree and kind of development under the inter-relation and inter-action of all the beings involved. From this general advance a co-ordination is brought about which provides the succeeding lines along which further evolution will proceed.

Q. What does it mean by "Great Being"? (page 16).

A. By "Great Being" is meant the sum of all beings, the totality of all intelligences involved.

Q. How can there always be matter in the lowest grade to be evolved, and where does it come from?

A. An understanding of the evolution of beings can only be had by bearing in mind that Spirit, or Consciousness, with Its "power to perceive", is the producer of all degrees of substance and the cause of all changes. During manifestation evolution is going on all the time and consequently from the first glimmerings of perception there must be a corresponding substantial or material expression of it. Substance, or Matter, is a product of Spirit, or Consciousness, and this includes all the elements of Nature—so-called, known or yet to be known or produced.

Q. What becomes of the forms used by lower intelligences after these intelligences have arisen higher?

A. Every form, high or low, having been established, remains as a matrix in the astral substance and can be availed of by such intelligences as have arrived at a point which makes such use possible. The Unity of all beings and the economy of progress demands this; "no effort is lost, no labor is in vain". Just as the line of physical heredity reproduces itself from parents to children, and conditions of various kinds are brought about and Egos incarnate

under the conditions provided according to their karma or "fitness", so with the lower kingdoms in advancing to higher forms of expression, they assume the established forms used by their predecessors. The matrices of all forms that have ever been still exist in the Astral Light.

Q. On page 17 we have mention of the British inch and Piazzi Smyth; to what does that refer?

A. Piazzi Smyth was a F. R. A. S. who investigated, studied and measured the Great Pyramid. Being a very patriotic Englishman, as well as a very Orthodox Christian, he evolved and promulgated the theory that the geometric measurements of the Great Pyramid proved that the scientific basis of its construction was to demonstrate that the British inch, and not the metric system, is the true standard of linear measurement; and further, that the religious purpose in building the Pyramid was to enforce the Orthodox idea of the Sabbath and a warning against the Continental Sunday.

Q. Why is it said that "with the Orientals is the truth" about the age of the world?

A. Because the conceptions of the West in regard to the age of the world have been based upon theological deductions drawn from the misunderstood and unrelated manuscripts which make up the Christian Bible. The idea that the world is some few thousands of years old has been very generally accepted by Christendom, and Geologists who are the creatures of their generation have found themselves restricted in their speculations as to actual age. It is true that within the last century a greater freedom of expression and speculation has been indulged in, for discoveries of various kinds keep throwing farther and farther back such speculations, so that from a hundred thousand to a million years have been stated as the possible age of the earth. All those making such statements consistently admit that they are but guesses and matters of opinion. Where Western Science fails by reason of the basis of its thinking, Eastern Science, based upon the records of past ages and the ascertained laws of the evolution of the earth and Man, possesses not only the ancient records, but a knowledge of the laws by which the records themselves can be substantiated. In Theosophy, a knowledge of these laws and their workings is attainable by every student who takes advantage of the opportunity and pursues the necessary course. In secret places among a living people these records are sacredly preserved; Theosophy as given to the world is a portion of that accumulated wisdom and knowledge.

Q. Why is it that we are so much behind spiritually than what we were thousands of years ago?

A. Because the consciousness of mankind became so immersed in external terrestrial pursuits that the intellect, the power of reasoning from premises to conclusions, grew at the expense of the spiritual perceptions. The desire for an accentuation of physical sentient existence leads directly away from the consciousness of being spirit. Unless we regain the consciousness of spiritual being—a purposeful existence in spirit, not matter—we will

remain bound by our self-created conditions of physical existence. Intellect comes from seeing differences and comparing them; once gained, it may be used to perpetuate material existence with all its disadvantages, or as an instrument of the spirit in guiding and controlling the lower lives that constitute the kingdoms below Man.

Q. What were the "materials" that "had to be found, gathered together and fashioned in other and distant places"?

A. At the end of a Great Period, like that of a planet, all coarser forms of matter have been resolved back into the primordial substance from and within which they were formed; the experiences of the many classes of evolved beings are retained. At the next "going forth" new combinations and correlations arise from the greater knowledge acquired during the previous period of evolution, and a new construction or evolution of forms begins, based upon the advance already made. Necessarily the experience gained by the various classes of beings in fashioning form remains, and as the "material" is in a homogeneous state, formation begins in that state and is made more and more concrete as the ages roll on. All this in general. Theosophy teaches that our Moon was the planet upon which our evolution had its immediately previous field, and that as the Earth has been builded, the Moon has shrunk and disintegrated. From this we may imagine that "material" from the Moon has been and is being used in the building of the Earth and Earth forms, and that this will go on until our Seventh Round when the Moon will have disappeared. This may be taken as one of the "distant places"; and others may be understood if we bear in mind that in this vast universe of which our planet forms a small part, and under the law of Unity which pervades the whole, our planet is related to and connected with all other planets in our system. As the great purpose is the Evolution of Soul, the great reservoir of ethereal substance must be available to those Intelligences whose knowledge and power can select and guide.

Q. If we have seven planes of being, is Karma made on all of them?

A. Karma operates on all planes and upon every being. Consciousness and Life on any plane imply perception and action, and these mean Karma. There are three lines of Evolution: the Spiritual, Intellectual and Physical, and these are inter-blended at every point. Progress on all planes is possible only by action. It is incorrect to imagine that Karma pertains only to the physical plane.

Q. Why is it said that Masters express Karma?

A. Because They know the ultimate results of all the actions They institute, whether these be spiritual, psychical or physical, and because all Their efforts are for the advancement of the whole mass of beings.

Q. On page 19 it is stated that "When this day opens, cosmic evolution, so far as relates to this solar system, begins and occupies between one and two billions of years in evolving the very ethereal first matter before the astral kingdoms of mineral, vegetable, animal and men are possible". Can this be explained?

A. There must be for each Manvantara a specific primordial substance from and within which the subsequent differentiations are formed. Each beginning of a Manvantara must have as its basic substance what might be called a differentiation within the One Infinite Universal Substance, as a result of the operation of Intelligence upon it; this is brought about by the inter-action and inter-relation of all the beings involved in the previous evolutionary stream, and as a preliminary to further differentiation.

SUMMARY.

The First Chapter treats of the Masters of Wisdom who are the results of Evolutionary progress, and the custodians of accumulated wisdom of the past. The Second Chapter presents the general principles that govern the cosmos. The seven-fold differentiation of the system is shown to be universal in its operation, every atom as well as every being having seven principles, either latent or expressed as the case may be. Mind, or Intelligence, represents the acquired knowledge of the totality of beings involved, the higher intelligences being the guides and impellers of the lower. Each great period of evolution has its specific beginning based upon past achievements, and has its ending in order to co-ordinate the general advance and form a new basis for another great period; these periods are called the Days of Brahma, each such period being followed by a Night of similar duration for assimilation and readjustment. Evolution is accomplished solely by the self-conscious Egos within, who guiding and impelling the lower lives—the builders of form—finally occupy those forms when they are ready. The story of the building of Solomon's Temple is that of the evolution of Man "wherein no sound of hammer, nor voice of workman is heard". Each of the seven principles of Man is derived from one of the seven great Divisions of the Universe; he therefore is directly connected with and related to every state of substance and every plane of being through these principles. Man is *not* his principles: they are his instruments or embodiments. "For the Soul's sake alone the Universe exists".

FROM THE SECRET DOCTRINE*

Matter is *Eternal*. It is the *Upadhi* (the physical basis) for the One infinite Universal Mind to build thereon its ideations. Therefore, the Esotericists maintain that there is no inorganic or *dead* matter in nature, the distinction between the two made by Science being as unfounded as it is arbitrary and devoid of reason. Whatever Science may think, however—and *exact* Science is a fickle dame, as we all know by experience—Occultism knows and teaches differently from time immemorial—from *Manu* and *Hermes* down to Paracelsus and his successors.

* From the Original Edition Vol. I, pp. 280-281; see Vol. I, p. 301, Third Edition.

AROUND THE TABLE

"PLEASANT to sit and talk this way", remarked Doctor, stifling a yawn, "but we ought to be asleep, every one of us, this very minute."

It was in fact getting a bit late for busy people to be unnecessarily awake. The Family had attended a theosophical meeting that evening, and now lingered in the comfortable living-room to "talk things over." Mentor was as alert as ever, for the clock never seems to exist for him. Mother had picked up her knitting, utilizing every moment as is her habit. Spinster was unusually bright-eyed, declaring that sleep had no immediate charms for her..

"Funny thing I heard tonight", remarked Doctor, with a reminiscent chuckle—"a pitiful thing, too", he continued more soberly. "One man I talked with after the meeting was an old-time student of the philosophy, he said, and came out to the West to join a certain group of students who have established a community here. He found things so different from what he expected, so completely out of line with the common-sense teachings of Theosophy that he at last left the community, poorer in health and purse."

"I don't see why you call that 'funny'," said Mother warmly, as the Doctor paused in his remarks. "For a man long past middle life to break away from his friends and old associations and then meet such a bitter disappointment seems to me anything but 'funny'."

"The amusing part comes later, Mother", resumed Doctor. "I gave you the pitiful part first. This man told me that the woman who was pointed to as the 'occult head' of this group of students, used to go into some sort of a trance now and then, and imitate what she supposed to be H. P. B.'s tone and manner. The implication was, of course, that this 'medium' was getting messages from H. P. B. And the students believed it, swallowed it as readily as a child takes candy. Can you credit such a thing among theosophical students in this day and age, Mentor?"

"I haven't the slightest doubt of it, Doctor", answered Mentor gravely. "For I have heard before of this particular case you mention. There are plenty of credulous people in the ranks of the Theosophical organizations today—this fact indeed keeps most of these societies in existence."

"But would you think that anything so crudely pretentious could possibly fool people intelligent enough to grasp even the simplest theosophical concepts?" insisted Doctor earnestly.

"The fact remains that it does", was the answer, "and students will thus permit themselves to be deceived as long as they continue to follow persons, and refuse to stand upon the philosophy itself as their basis.

"Somebody writes a few cryptic sentences, signs a pen name to them and prints them in a theosophical magazine", continued Mentor with a smile. "The matter itself is either a weak rearrangement of

some of the true old writings, or perhaps a bit of twaddle of the 'sweetness and light' type. 'Ah! here is a message from the Master', cry some sentimental students, and no denial being made, all writings that appear thereafter over that pen name are accredited to some high and holy source."

"It's old human superstition coming to the surface, isn't it", remarked Spinster interestedly. "Why, I read something of the sort not long ago in a theosophical magazine. The implication was that the Masters had communicated the article through some personal channel, that They were struggling for the right in this world war, and so forth—all that silly kind of sentimentality, you know", she continued with a gesture of gushing words running on and on—"quite out of line with H. P. P.'s and W. Q. J.'s teachings, direct and indirect, in regard to Masters. Why, you'd think to read it that They were actually struggling with 'dark powers' on the 'astral plane'—it was almost as materialistic as some of Mr. Sinnett's later writings", she ended with a smile.

"What's the cause of that kind of nonsense, Mentor?" asked Doctor, earnestly.

"Two human tendencies", answered the latter briefly: "the desire of some people to appear as possessing high occult preferment; and the great capacity of average human nature to believe anything and everything read or heard. If students would only take to heart what Mr. Judge pointed out in regard to these various 'messages'—utilize the same kind of good common-sense they employ in ordinary matters of life—there would be more real Theosophy, and less of 'astral gossip', in theosophical circles."

"Why, he said the message itself told its own story, didn't he, Mentor?" remarked Doctor briskly. "Seems to me I remember the advice he gave to students condenses to just about that."

"Well, I'll tell you a true incident", answered Mentor, with a reminiscent smile, "and you can draw your own deductions from it. I was myself present at the meeting I will describe, together with Mr. Judge and a half dozen or more students—their names do not matter. The place was Chicago; the year 1894, or thereabouts.

"A prominent member in Chicago", Mentor continued, "had received a 'message', and at the meeting I am speaking of asked Mr. Judge if he would say whether it was a genuine Master's message, or not. Mr. Judge, after examining the paper, handed it to a lady sitting near him and asked her to state if the message were genuine. This lady was a very prominent theosophical worker whose writings had helped thousands of students and who was considered by many as very 'far advanced' in an occult way. She took the paper, held it against her solar plexus for a few moments, looking very intently off into space—quite with the air of a seeress—emerging from 'the silence' with an audible sigh and declaring the message 'genuine'.

"Mr. Judge then handed the paper to another student—a professional man of high standing who was devoting his life and fortune to theosophical work, was widely known as a lecturer, and who

was considered by many a deeply versed 'esotericist'. This student placed the paper against his forehead, closed his eyes, looking very solemn and impressive for quite a few moments. He then declared the message *not* 'genuine'.

"Several other students were then asked to pronounce upon the matter; and each of them went through some sort of performance like those I have mentioned: one held the paper behind his back against his spine, I remember—please understand, Family, I am not romancing, but describing what went on before my own eyes—and Mr. Judge was as grave and serious through it all as you can imagine.

"Well, opinions were conflicting and about equally divided in regard to the paper, when Mr. Judge handed it to another student—this one a man of no pretentions but considerable common-sense. I remember he had a high, thin, piping voice, and I can hear him now as clearly as if he were presently speaking. He took the paper, read it, and handed it back to Mr. Judge. 'What do *you* say?' asked the latter. 'Why, I don't know', was the answer, 'but the advice in it seems excellent'. His thin piping voice fairly shrilled through the room.

"'*That's good,* Louie', said Mr. Judge—and went on talking about other matters, as if the question of the message were at last settled. He had been serious and unsmiling through all the psychic 'flip-flaps' and posturings of the students present, but I caught the glint of a twinkle in his eye now and then. A little later some of the students asked him if the message were indeed genuine. 'What difference does it make', was his answer, 'it may be or may not be; but as Louie has said, the advice in it seems excellent'; and with this remark the incident closed."

"I wonder how many of those students got the lesson", chuckled Doctor.

"Did Mr. Judge ask *you,* Mentor, to pass upon the genuineness of the message?" Mother enquired innocently.

Mentor laughed delightedly. "No, he did not, Mother—but 'Louie' had been doing theosophical work under my direction for some five or six years", he added, "if that information helps you any."

There was a general laugh at this, and the Family group broke up, to get some much needed rest.

"I never hear *you* 'giving out' any messages, Mentor", said Spinster, turning back at the door for a moment, with a little appreciative smile for her old friend.

"No, my dear", was the answer, "they're all given out—that is, the genuine ones. And you'll find them in the standard theosophical books—the writings of H. P. B. and W. Q. J. Full directions there for any and every student who wants to get on his own feet, theosophically speaking. We sure won't get any special 'messages' from Masters until we take full advantage of the general and easily accessible ones to be found in the printed words."

ANIMATED STATUES*

TO whatsoever cause it may be due matters little, but the word *fetich* is given in the dictionaries the restricted sense of "an object selected temporarily for worship," "a small idol used by the African *savages*," etc., etc.

In his "Des Cultes Anterieurs à l'Idolatrie," Dulaure defines Fetichism as "the adoration of an object considered by the ignorant and the weak-minded as the receptacle or the habitation of a god or genius."

Now all this is extremely erudite and profound, no doubt; but it lacks the merit of being either true or correct. Fetich may be an *idol* among the negroes of Africa, according to Webster; and there are weak-minded and ignorant people certainly who are fetich worshippers. Yet the theory that certain objects—statues, images, and *amulets* for example—serve as a temporary or even constant habitation to a "god," "genius" or *spirit* simply, has been shared by some of the most intellectual men known to history. It was *not* originated by the ignorant and weak-minded, since the majority of the world's sages and philosophers, from *credulous* Pythagoras down to sceptical Lucian, believed in such a thing in antiquity; as in our highly civilized, cultured and learned century several hundred millions of Christians still believe in it, whether the above definitions be correct or the one we shall now give. The administration of the Sacrament, the mystery of Transubstantiation "in the *supposed* conversion of the bread and wine of the Eucharist into the body and blood of Christ," would render the bread and wine and the communion cup along with them *fetiches*—no less than the tree or rag or stone of the savage African. Every miracle-working image, tomb and statue of a Saint, Virgin or Christ, in the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches, have thus to be regarded as *fetiches*; because, whether the miracle is supposed to be wrought by God or an angel, by Christ or a saint, those images or statues *do* become—if the miracle be claimed as *genuine*—"the receptacle or dwelling" for a longer or shorter time of God or an "angel of God."

It is only in the "Dictionaire des Religions" (Article on *Fetichisme*) that a pretty correct definition may be found: "The word *fetich* was derived from the Portuguese word *fetisso*, "enchanted," "bewitched" or "charmed;" whence *fatum*, "destiny," *fatua*, "fairy," etc.

Fetich, moreover, was and still ought to be identical with "idol;" and as the author of "The Teraphim of Idolatry" says, "Fetichism is the adoration *of any object*, whether inorganic or living, large or of minute proportions, *in which*, or, *in connection with which*,—any "spirit"—good or bad in short—an invisible intelligent power—has manifested its presence."

* This article was first printed in *The Theosophist* for November, 1886.

Having collected for my "Secret Doctrine" a number of notes upon this subject, I may now give some of them *apropos* of the latest *theosophical* novel "A Fallen Idol," and thus show that work of fiction based on some very occult truths of Esoteric Philosophy.

The images of all the gods of antiquity, from the earliest Aryans down to the latest Semites—the Jews,—were all idols and fetiches, whether called *Teraphim*, *Urim* and *Thummim*, Kabeiri, or cherubs, or the gods *Lares*. If, speaking of the *teraphim*—a word that Grotius translates as "angels," an etymology authorized by Cornelius, who says that they "were the symbols of *angelic* presence"—the Christians are allowed to call them "the mediums through which *divine presence* was manifested," why not apply the same to the idols of the "heathen"?

I am perfectly alive to the fact that the modern man of science, like the average sceptic, believes no more in an "animated" image of the Roman Church than he does in the "animated" fetich of a savage. But there is no question, at present, of belief or disbelief. It is simply the evidence of antiquity embracing a period of several thousands of years, as against the denial of the XIXth century—the century of Spiritualism and Spiritism, of Theosophy and Occultism, of Charcot and his hypnotism, of psychic "suggestion," and of unrecognized BLACK MAGIC all round.

Let us Europeans honour the religion of our forefathers, by questioning it on its beliefs and their origin, before placing on its defence pagan antiquity and its grand philosophy; where do we find in Western sacred literature, so-called, the first mention of idols and fetiches? In chapter xxxi (*et seq*) of Genesis, in Ur of the Chaldees in Mesopotamia, wherein the ancestors of Abraham, Serug and Terah, worshipped little idols in clay which they called their *gods;* and where also, in Haran, Rachel stole the images (*teraphim*) of her father Laban. Jacob may have forbidden the worship of those gods, yet one finds 325 years after that prohibition, the Mosaic Jews adoring "the gods of the Amorites" all the same (Joshua xxiv. 14, 15). The teraphim-gods of Laban exist to this day among certain tribes of Mussulmans on Persian territory. They are small statuettes of tutelary genii, or gods, which are consulted on every occasion. The Rabbis explain that Rachel had no other motive for stealing her father's *gods* than that of preventing his learning from them the direction she and her husband Jacob had taken, lest he should prevent them from leaving his home once more. Thus, it was not piety, or the fear of the Lord God of Israel, but simply a dread of the indiscretion of the gods that made her secure them. Moreover, her mandrakes were only another kind of sortilegious and magical implements.

Now what is the opinion of various classical and even sacred writers on these *idols*, which Hermes Trismegistus calls "statues foreseeing futurity" (*Asclepias*)?

Philo of Biblos shows that the Jews consulted *demons* like the Amorites, especially through small statues made of gold, shaped as nymphs which, questioned at any hour, would instruct them what the querists had to do and what to avoid ("Antiquities"). In "More Nevochim" (1. iii) it is said that nothing resembled more those *portative* and *preserving* gods of the pagans (*dii portatiles vel Averrunci*) than those tutelary gods of the Jews. They were "veritable phylacteries or *animated* talismans, the *spirantia simulacra* of Apuleius (Book xi), whose *answers, given* in the temple of the goddess of Syria, *were heard* by Lucian personally, and repeated by him. Kircher (the Jesuit Father) shows also that the *teraphim* looked, in quite an extraordinary way, like the pagan *Serapises* of Egypt; and Cedrenus seems to corroborate that statement of Kircher (in his vol. iii., p. 494, "Œdipus," etc.) by showing that the *t* and the *s* (like the Sanskrit *s* and Zend *h*) were convertible letters, the *Seraphim* (or *Serapis*) and the *teraphim,* being absolute synonyms.

As to the use of these idols, Maimonides tells us ("More Nevochim," p. 41) that these gods or images passed for being endowed with the prophetic gift, and as being able to tell the people in whose possession they were "all that was useful and salutary for them."

All these images, we are told, had the form of a baby or small child, others were only occasionally much larger. They were statues or regular idols in the human shape. The Chaldeans exposed them to the beams of certain planets for the latter to imbue them with their virtues and potency. These were for purposes of astro-magic; the regular *teraphim* for those of necromancy and sorcery, in most cases. The spirits of the dead (elementaries) were attached to them by magic art, and they were used for various sinful purposes.

Ugolino* puts in the mouth of the sage Gamaliel, St. Paul's master (or *guru*), the following words, which he quotes, he says from his "Capito," chap. xxxvi: "They (the possessors of such necromantic *teraphim*) killed a new-born baby, cut off its head, and placed under its tongue, salted and oiled, a little gold lamina in which the name of *an evil* spirit was perforated; then, after suspending that head on the wall of their chamber, they lighted lamps before it, and prostrate on the ground they *conversed with it.*"

The learned Marquis de Mirville believes that it was just such ex-human *fetiches* that were meant by Philostratus, who gives a number of instances of the same. "There was the head of Orpheus"—he says—"which spoke to Cyrus, and the head of a priest-sacrificer from the temple of Jupiter Hoplosmius which, when severed from its body, revealed, as Aristotle narrates, the name of its murderer, one called Cencidas; and the head of one

* Ugolino—"Thesaur"—Vol. xxiii., p. 475.

Publius Capitanus, which, according to Trallianus, at the moment of the victory won by Acilius the Roman Consul, over Antiochus, King of Asia, predicted to the Romans the great misfortunes that would soon befall them, &c. ("Pn. des Esprits," Vol. iii., 29 Memoir to the Academy, p. 252.)

Diodorus tells the world how such idols were fabricated for magical purposes in days of old. Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, having, in consequence of a fright given premature birth to a child of seven months, Cadmus, in order to follow *the custom of his country* and to give it (the babe) a *supermundane* origin *which would make it live after death*, enclosed its body within a gold statue, and made of it an idol for which a special cult and rites were established." (Diodorus, lib. i. p. 48.)

As Freret, in his articles in the "Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions," Vol. xxiii, p. 247—pointedly remarks, when commenting upon the above passage: "A singular thing, deserving still more attention, is that the said *consecration* of Semele's baby, which the *Orphics* show as having been the custom of Cadmus' ancestors—is *precisely the ceremony described by the Rabbis*, as cited by Seldenus, with regard to the *teraphim* or household gods of the Syrians and the Phœnicians. There is little probability, however, that the Jews should have been acquainted with the Orphics."

Thus, there is every reason to believe that the numerous drawings in Father Kircher's *Œdipus*, little figures and heads with metallic laminæ protruding from under their tongues, which hang entirely out of the heads' mouths, are real and genuine teraphims—as shown by de Mirville. Then again in Le Blanc's "Religions," (Vol. iii, p. 277), speaking of the Phœnician *teraphim*, the author compares them to the Greco-Phrygian *palladium*, which contained human relics. "All the mysteries of the apotheosis, of orgies, sacrifices and magic, were applied to such heads. A child young enough to have his innocent soul still united with the *Anima Mundi*—the Mundane Soul—was killed," he says; "his head was embalmed *and its soul* was *fixed in it, as it is averred, by the power of magic and enchantments.*" After which followed the usual process, the gold lamina, etc., etc.

Now this is terrible Black Magic, we say; and none but the *dugpas* of old, the villainous sorcerers of antiquity, used it. In the Middle Ages only several Roman Catholic priests are known to have resorted to it; among others the apostate Jacobin priest in the service of Queen Catherine of Medici, that faithful daughter of the Church of Rome and the author of the "St. Bartholomew Massacre." The story is given by Bodin, in his famous work on Sorcery "Le Demonomanie, ou Traité des Sorciers" (Paris, 1587); and it is quoted in "Isis Unveiled" (Vol. ii, p. 56). Pope Sylvester II was publicly accused by Cardinal Benno of sorcery, on account of his "Brazen Oracular Head." These heads and other

talking statues, trophies of the magical skill of monks and bishops, were fac-similes of the *animated* gods of the ancient temples. Benedict IX, John XX, and the VIth and VIIth Popes Gregory are all known in history as sorcerers and magicians. Notwithstanding such an array of facts to show that the Latin Church has despoiled the ancient Jews of all—aye, even of their knowledge of *black art* inclusively—one of their advocates of modern times, namely, the Marquis de Mirville, is not ashamed to publish against the modern Jews, the most terrible and foul of accusations!

In his violent polemics with the French symbologists, who try to find a philosophical explanation for ancient Bible customs and rites, he says: "We pass over the symbolic significations that are sought for to explain all such customs of the idolatrous Jews. (Their *human* teraphim and severed baby-heads), because we do not believe in them (such explanations) at all. But we do believe, for one, that 'the head' consulted by the Scandinavian Odin in every difficult affair was a *teraphim* of the same (magic) class. And that *in which we believe still more*, is, that all *those mysterious disappearances and abductions of small (Christian) children,* practised at all times and even in our own day by the Jews—*are the direct consequences of those ancient and barbarous necromantic practices.* . . . Let the reader remember the incident of Demas and Father Thomas." ("Pneum des Esprits," Vol. iii, p. 254.)

Quite clear and unmistakable this. The unfortunate, despoiled Israelites are plainly charged with abducting Christian children to behead and make *oracular* heads with them, for purposes of sorcery! Where will bigotry and intolerance with their *odium theologicum* land next, I wonder?

On the contrary, it seems quite evident that it is just in consequence of such terrible malpractices of Occultism that Moses and the early ancestors of the Jews were so strict in carrying out the severe prohibition against graven images, statues and likenesses in any shape, of either "gods" or living men. This same reason was at the bottom of the like prohibition by Mohammed and enforced by all the Mussulman prophets. For the *likeness of any person*, in whatever form and mode, of whatever material, *may be turned into a deadly weapon against the original by a really learned practitioner of the black art.* Legal authorities during the Middle Ages, and even some of 200 years ago, were not wrong in putting to death those in whose possession small wax figures of their enemies were found, for it was *murder contemplated*, pure and simple. "Thou shalt not draw the *vital spirits* of thy enemy, or of any person into his *simulacrum*," for "this is a heinous crime against nature." And again: "Any object into which the *fiat* of a spirit has been drawn is dangerous, and must not be left in the hands of the ignorant. . . . An expert (in magic) has to be called to purify it." ("Pract. Laws of Occult

Science," Book v., Coptic copy.) In a kind of "Manual" of Elementary Occultism, it is said: "To make a bewitched object (*fetich*) harmless, its parts have to be reduced to atoms (broken), and the whole buried in damp soil"—(follow instructions, unnecessary in a publication).*

That which is called "vital spirits" is the astral body. "Souls, whether united or separated from their bodies, *have a corporeal substance inherent to their nature*," says St. Hilarion ("Comm. in Matth." C. v. No. 8). Now the astral body of a living person, of one unlearned in occult sciences, may be forced (by an expert in magic) to animate, or be drawn to, *and then fixed within* any object, especially into anything made in his likeness, a portrait, a statue, a little figure in wax, &c. And as whatever hits or affects the astral reacts by repercussion on the physical body, it becomes logical and stands to reason that, by stabbing the likeness in its vital parts—the heart, for instance—the original may be sympathetically killed, without any one being able to detect the cause of it. The Egyptians, who separated man (*exoterically*) into three divisions or groups—"mind body" (pure spirit, our 7th and 6th prin.); the spectral soul (the 5th, 4th, and 3rd principles); and the gross body (*prana and sthula sarira*), called forth in their theurgies and evocations (for divine *white magical* purposes, as well as for those of the black art) the "spectral soul," or astral body, as we call it.

"It was not the soul itself that was evoked, but its *simulacrum* that the Greeks called *Eidôlon*, and which was the middle principles between soul and body. That doctrine came from the East, the cradle of all learning. The Magi of Chaldea as well as all other followers of Zoroaster, believed that it was not the *divine* soul alone (spirit) which would participate in the glory of celestial light, but also the *sensitive* soul." ("Psellus, in Scholiis, in Orac.")

Translated into our Theosophical phraseology, the above refers to Atma and Buddhi—the vehicle of spirit. The Neo-Platonics, and even Origen,—"call the astral body *Augoeides* and *Astroeides*, *i. e.*, one having the brilliancy of the stars" ("Sciences Occultes," by Cte. de Resie, Vol. ii, p. 598-9.)

Generally speaking, the world's ignorance on the nature of the human phantom and vital principle, as on the functions of all man's principles, is deplorable. Whereas science denies them all—an easy way of cutting the gordian knot of the difficulty—the churches have evolved the fanciful dogma of one solitary principle, the Soul, and neither of the two will stir from its respective preconceptions, notwithstanding the evidence of all antiquity and its most intellectual writers. Therefore, before the question can be

* The author of "A Fallen Idol,"—whether through natural intuition or study of occult laws it is for him to say—shows knowledge of this fact by making Nebelsen say that the *spirit* or the tirthankar was paralyzed and torpid during the time his idol had been buried in India. That Eidôlon or Elementary could do nothing. See p. 295.

argued with any hope of lucidity, the following points have to be settled and studied by our Theosophists—those, at any rate, who are interested in the subject:

1. The difference between a physiological hallucination and a psychic or spiritual clairvoyance and clairaudience.

2. Spirits, or the entities of certain invisible beings—whether *ghosts* of once living men, angels, spirits, or elementals,—have they, or have they not, a natural though an ethereal and to us invisible body? Are they united to, or can they assimilate some fluidic substance that would help them to become visible to men?

3. Have they, or have they not, the power of so becoming infused among the atoms of any object, whether it be a statue (idol), a picture, or an amulet, as to impart to it their potency and virtue, and even to *animate* it?

4. Is it in the power of any Adept, Yogi or Initiate, *to fix* such entities, whether by *White* or *Black* magic, in certain objects?

5. What are the various conditions (save Nirvana and Avitchi) of good and bad men after death? etc., etc.

All this may be studied in the literature of the ancient classics, and especially in Aryan literature. Meanwhile, I have tried to explain and have given the collective and individual opinions thereon of all the great philosophers of antiquity in my "Secret Doctrine." I hope the book will now very soon appear. Only, in order to counteract the effects of such humoristical works as "A Fallen Idol" on weak-minded people, who see in it only a satire upon our beliefs, I thought best to give here the testimony of the ages to the effect that such *post-mortem* pranks as played by Mr. Anstey's sham ascetic, who died a sudden death, are of no rare occurrence in nature.

To conclude, the reader may be reminded that if the astral body of man is no *superstition* founded on mere hallucinations, but a reality in nature, then it becomes only logical that such an *eidôlon*, whose individuality is all centred after death in his *personal* Ego—should be attracted to the remains of the body that was his, during life;* and in case the latter was burnt and the ashes buried, that it should seek to prolong its existence vicariously by either possessing itself of some living body (a medium's), or, by attaching itself to his own statue, picture, or some familiar object in the house or locality that it inhabited. The "vampire" theory, can hardly be a superstition altogether. Throughout all Europe, in Germany, Styria, Moldavia, Servia, France and Russia, those bodies of the deceased who are believed to have become *vampires*, have *special exorcismal rites* established for them by their respective Churches. Both the Greek and Latin religions think it beneficent to have such bodies dug out and transfixed to the earth by a pole of aspen-tree wood.

* Even burning does not affect its interference or prevent it entirely—since it can avail itself of the ashes. *Earth* alone will make it powerless.

However it may be, whether truth or superstition, ancient philosophers and poets, classics and lay writers, have believed as we do now, and that for several thousand years in history, that man had within him his astral counterpart, which would appear by separating itself or oozing out of the gross body, during life as well as after the death of the latter. Till that moment the "spectral soul" was the vehicle of the divine soul and the pure spirit. But, as soon *as the flames had devoured* the physical envelope, the spiritual soul, separating itself from the *simulacrum* of man, ascended to its new home of unalloyed bliss (Devachan or Swarga), while the spectral eidôlon *descended* into the regions of Hades (*limbus*, purgatory, or *Kama loka*). "I have terminated my earthly career," exclaims Dido, "my glorious spectre (astral body), the IMAGE of my person, will now descend into the womb of the earth.*

"Et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago" ("Eneid," lib. iv, 654.)

Sabinus and Servius Honoratus (a learned commentator of Virgil of the VIth cent.) have taught, as shown by Delris, the demonlogian (lib. ii, ch. xx and xxv, p. 116) that man was composed, *besides his soul*, of a shadow (*umbra*) and a body. The *soul* ascends to heaven, the *body* is pulverized, and the *shadow* is plunged in *Hades*. . . . This phantom—*umbra seu simulacrum*—is not a *real* body, they say: it is the *appearance* of one, that no hand can touch, as it avoids contact like a breath. Homer shows this same shadow in the phantom of Patroclus, who perished, killed by Hector, and yet "Here he is—it is *his face*, his voice, his blood still flowing from his wounds!" (See "Iliad," xxiii, and also "Odyssey," i, xi.) The ancient Greeks and Latins had two souls—*anima bruta* and *anima divina*, the first of which is in Homer the animal soul, the image and the life of the body, and the second, the immortal and the divine.

As to our *Kama loka*, Ennius, says Lucrecius—"has traced the picture of the sacred regions in Acherusia, where dwell *neither our bodies nor our souls*, but only our simulacres, whose pallidity is dreadful to behold!" It is amongst those *shades* that divine Homer appeared to him, shedding bitter tears *as though the gods had created that honest man for eternal sorrow only*. It is from the midst of that world (*Kama loka*), which *seeks with avidity communication with our own*, that this *third* (part) of the poet, his *phantom*—explained to him the mysteries of nature. . . .[1]

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* Which is not the *interior* of the earth, or *hell*, as taught by the *anti*-geological theologians, but the cosmic matrix of its region —the astral light of our atmosphere.

[1] . . . Esse Acherusia templa
Quo neque permanent animae, neque corpora nostra,
Sed quaedam simulacra, modis pallentia miris,
Unde sibi exortam semper florentis Homeri
Commemorat speciem lacrymas et fundere salsas
Coepisse, et rerum naturam, expandere dictis.

Pythagoras and Plato both divided soul into two representative parts, independent of each other—the one, the rational soul, or λόγον, the other, *irrational,* ἄλογον—the latter being again subdivided into two parts or aspects, the θυμιχὸν and the ἐπιθυμιχὸν, which, with the divine soul and its spirit and the body, make the *seven* principles of Theosophy. What Virgil calls *imago,* "image," Lucretius names—*simulacrum,* "similitude" (See "De Nat. rerum" 1), but they are all names for one and the same thing, the *astral body.*

We gather thus two points from the ancients entirely corroborative of our esoteric philosophy: (*a*) the astral or materialized figure of the dead is neither *the soul,* nor the *spirit,* nor the *body* of the deceased personage, but simply the *shadow* thereof, which justifies our calling it a "shell;" and (*b*) unless it be an *immortal God* (an angel) who animates an object, it can never be a *spirit,* to wit, the SOUL, or real, spiritual ego of a once living man; for these ascend, and an astral shadow (unless it be of a living person) can never be higher than a terrestrial, *earth-bound* ego, or an *irrational* shell. Homer was therefore right in making Telemachus exclaim, on seeing Ulysses, who reveals himself to his son: "No, thou art not my father, thou art a demon, a spirit who flatters and deludes me!"

> Οὐσὺγ' Ὀδυσσεύσ ἐσσι πατὴρ ἐμὸσ ἀλλάμε δαὶμων
> θέλγει
>
> ("Odyssey," xvi, 194.)

It is such illusive shadows, belonging to neither Earth nor Heaven, that are used by sorcerers and other adepts of the Black Art, to help them in persecutions of victims; to hallucinate the minds of very honest and well meaning persons occasionally, who fall victims to the mental epidemics aroused by them for a purpose; and to oppose in every way the beneficent work of the guardians of mankind, whether divine or—human.

For the present, enough has been said to show that the Theosophists have the evidence of the whole of antiquity in support of the correctness of their doctrines.

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

SECRET DOCTRINE TEACHINGS*

The Occultists, having most perfect faith in their own exact records, astronomical and mathematical, calculate the age of Humanity, and assert that the latter (as separate sexes) has existed in this Round just 18,618,727 years, as the Brahmanical teachings and even some Hindu calendars declare.

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* From the Original Edition Vol. I, p. 150, foot note; see Vol. I, p. 174, Third Edition.

THE IDEA OF BEING

THE word "being" is the present participle of the verb *to be*, that is, to have the potentiality of action, for it is to be remembered that a "verb" does not necessarily denote *action*; it may also signify "being, or the state of being." Some think the essence of a verb is predication, or the affirmation that is action, but a little reflection will convince one that the *essence* lies in the potentiality; action is the opposed phase of the verb to potentiality, and is wrapped up in the potentiality, as the lotus is enfolded in the seed; and "state of being" implies what is essential to action, that is to say, the subject who or which acts, and the mechanism of action. For without the subject there is neither action nor state of being, and without the mechanism there is only the subject and the potentiality.

Further, the present participle is that form of the verb which most clearly partakes and is indicative of the threefold nature of the verb. In it are alike the *presence* of the subject, the *subsistence* of the action, and the *modification* or *limitation* that all action requires for its predication. And still further, the present participle implies the perfect participle, and also the predicated future. "Perfect," it is well to remember, always relates to what is past, to what is *finished*, so that when we speak of "perfection," and speak accurately, we are never referring to what is being or is to be enacted, but in fact to a state, the fruit of actions of the past. If we say, "he, or it, is *perfect*," we really imply that the stage of ripeness has been already arrived at, action of growth has ceased, and the "state of being" exists. So when we mention Masters as "perfect" or "perfected" men, we ought to realize that They no longer *act* as men, but are a ripened state, which to us is only a predicated future. Mahatmaship is the continuance of the state of the perfected being, the ever-present subsistence of the subject with the potentiality of any and all modifications, or actions. He is no longer in form, but all forms of action are in Him.

With the old Romans, and indeed with all the elder or "perfected" nations, language had a fineness, a sensitiveness, a delicacy, because a precision of use, that to us is only a potentiality because it appertains to the future; it is a predication, a possibility. Our language is still of action, because it is still growing; theirs, to us, is a past thing, a thing perfected and finished, but to them, in their employment of it, it was a present structure, a mechanism for the action of thought, complex but complete, and almost entirely devoid of duplicities. Our word "verb" is a shard taken from the crumbling ceramics in which the old Romans enclosed their thought, but much of the Latin content of *verbum* has evaporated from our patched vessel of language.

Verbum meant indifferently a word, a name, a verb, *depending on how it was used*. When used as a word merely, there was im

plicit in it the *reality* behind all names, and the potentiality of action in all realities. When used as a name there was implicit in it the reality of all subjects or words and their potentialities, and not merely those of the particular subject so named. When used as a verb there was implicit in it not merely the definition of action, being and, or, state of being, but all actions, all beings and all states, past, present or to come. From this we may gain some perception of the mighty diapason of Saint John the evangel when he said, "In the beginning was God, and the Verbum was with God, and the Verbum was God."

But Latin, and even Greek, perfected and finished as they are, and therefore models for our imitation and emulation in the perfecting of our use of our own tongue, are but pale shadows of the noble Sanskrit, the perfection of language of the past Race, embodying in it all former perfections since the beginning of speech upon this earth. For Sanskrit, in the days when it was a living tongue, was also the living vehicle of thought. Its sounds, the *active* phase of language, were so entirely the vehicle of meaning, that they conveyed their own definition, and immediately induced in the mind of the listener the exact modification—that is, *the exact state of being* —of the speaker. Misunderstanding by one of another, so universally common and unavoidable in our times, was then unknown, for language was the *living antaskarana* of thought or ideation. The listener not merely heard sounds and words: he heard, he saw, he felt, what was taking place in the mind of the speaker, *as if it were himself.*

That day will come again, and Sanskrit once more become the language of men, as it has been and is, the language of the Gods—or perfected men. To hasten the advent of that day, with all that it implies, was the reason for the coming of H. P. Blavatsky among men, for her writing, teaching, working as she did, and for her interjection into the language of Theosophy of so many Sanskrit terms and ideas.

We may now return to the direct subject of Being, and endeavor to consider with a more opened, because more chastened, mind, what is sought to be conveyed to us by the statements she has recorded of the third of the Great Ideas of the *Secret Doctrine*. This third affirmation of Fundamental Propositions is, in her own words:

> The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul—a spark of the former—through the cycle of Incarnation (or "Necessity") in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle—or the OVER-SOUL,—has (a) passed

through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyani-Buddha).

If we are ever to gain anything from the writing and work of H. P. Blavatsky—and her public work and writing were incessant throughout a period of fifteen years—it is absolutely essential that the student shall undertake and achieve three gigantic preliminary tasks: He must recognize and shake off the superficial and inattentive methods of thought and action which have become embedded and ingrained in us all by force of the common ideas and common practices of the race to which we belong; he must gain a clear apprehension of what is sought to be conveyed in the statement of the Three Fundamental Propositions; he must in all his subsequent studies of her voluminous writings, bear unceasingly in mind the *implicit* presence of these three basic ideas as the *foundation, the structure,* and the *content,* whatever the elaboration or the detail she may be presently actively discussing.

Isis Unveiled was intended to clear away the rubbish and rubble of ideas with which all are afflicted in the name of religion, science and philosophy, and lay bare the universal foundations upon which all these have been builded. It will infallibly do that work for the individual student who reads and studies it with attention. It is a work of orientation, of getting one's bearings in the sea, the flotsam, and the jetsam of universal and individual experience.

The *Secret Doctrine* is to enable the student to take up the work where *Isis* leaves off. It is for the continuing Soul cleared of the *Kama Rupa* of former erroneous ideas, preconceptions and prejudices, ready to reincarnate in the new and pure womb of thought provided. It is not for those still clothed in the kamaloka or the devachan of prevailing ideas, circumstances or conditions. The study of the *Secret Doctrine* is the cycle of incubation, the prelude to the metempsychosis.

The Esoteric writings of H. P. B. are for those who have begun to be born again on to the higher plane of life, that breezy and well-lit plateau from whence the eyes see intelligently and regard the world with a new insight. There the mind no longer transmits its fluctuations, its partial knowledge, its unreliable information to the Soul. In that inner and higher world there leaps into flame the light of actual knowledge.

And here a word of warning. Not only the esoteric writings of H. P. B. are so in fact. There is a profound and deeply hidden *esotericism* in her most public writings; deeply and profoundly veiled of necessity, because of their accessibility. But there, and he who acquires even the first faint and tender indications of the com-

mencement of true actual life, the awakening of the intuition, can read with eager eyes layer after layer of meaning hidden within her words. All these are missed, as the manifold meaning of life and its events are missed, by those who do not recognize the necessity and undertake the achievement of the three preliminary tasks of the student. Well did Mr. Judge say, "the *authority* of the *Secret Doctrine* must be sought inside, not outside. It must rest on its comprehensiveness, its completeness, its continuity and reasonableness; in other words, on its *philosophical synthesis,* a thing missed alike by the superficial and the contentious, by the indolent, the superstitious, and the dogmatic."

H. P. B. advised all who might enter upon the survey of *Isis Unveiled:* "Our work, then, is a plea for the recognition of the anciently universal Wisdom-Religion as the only possible key to the Absolute in science and theology." She used the word plea in its strict primary and forensic sense of the recital of the facts, arguments and reasons upon which a claim is based. *Isis* is the plea; the Anciently-universal Wisdom-Religion is the claim thus sought to be established in the mind of the student.

H. P. B. advised all who might enter upon the study of the *Secret Doctrine:* "This work is written for the instruction of students of Occultism. The basic ideas are few in number, and on their clear apprehension depends the understanding of all that follows. These few fundamental conceptions underlie and pervade the entire system of thought to which his attention is invited. They are, in fact, contained—though too often under a misleading guise—in every system of thought or philosophy worthy of the name. Once that the reader has gained a clear comprehension of them and realised the light which they throw on every problem of life, they will need no further justification in his eyes, because their truth will be to him as evident as the sun in heaven."

In other words, the plea having been read, considered and digested from the survey of *Isis*, and judgment having been pronounced in favor of the Wisdom-Religion in the court of the individual's own conscience and consciousness, he comes now to the study of that Wisdom-Religion itself which before was but a claim, but which, judgment having been pronounced, he now seeks to enforce upon himself. The writ of execution has been issued: its first service lies in the seizure by the mind of a "clear apprehension" of the Fundamental Propositions. "All that follows" is but a partial pointing out of the processes, experiences, and results that may be discerned, because they have already taken place, and the guide to their right and further use and unfoldment, from whence he will *realise* "the light which they throw on every *problem* of life."

We have written in vain in this and in our two preceding articles* on the Great Ideas of Theosophy as recorded by H. P. Blavat-

* "The Idea of God," printed in THEOSOPHY for April, 1918; "The Idea of Law," printed in THEOSOPHY for June, 1918.

sky if there has not risen in the mind of the friendly disposed reader some perception of the Unity of all in Nature; of the *implicit* presence of the First Fundamental in the Second, of the First and Second in the Third; that the Third is explicit of the Second and First; and, finally, some perception and the beginning of recognition that *in him*, as in all other Beings is the embodiment, the actuality, and the presence of the Three Fundamental propositions, the One in Three, and the Three in One, howbeit "under a misleading guise."

This misleading guise of body, action and thought in us all is what is meant by H. P. B. when, after writing what has already been quoted in her own words, she continues:

> "The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations."

That "long series" is already drawing to its close in him who has grasped the divine illumination of the Three Great Ideas of Theosophy. He continues his studies, repeating the sacred Sanskrit affirmation of Being: BUDDHAM, SARANAM GATCHAMI, DHARMAM SARANAM GATCHAMI, SANGHAM SARANAM GATCHAMI. And to all his fellow Souls he repeats without ceasing the divine admonishment of the *Crest Jewel of Wisdom,* with which we also may conclude:

> "O wise man: you have asked rightly. Now listen carefully. The illusive fancies arising from error are not conclusive.
>
> "The great and peaceful ones live regenerating the world like the coming of spring, and after having themselves crossed the ocean of embodied existence, help those who try to do the same thing, without personal motives."

TRUE FRIENDSHIP*

From the Hiri Sutta of the Buddhists.

He who transgresses and despises modesty, who says—I am a friend! but undertakes nothing for his friend, know that he is no friend.

Whoever uses soft words to friends without sincerity, him the wise know as one that speaks but acts not.

He is no true friend who always eagerly suspects a breach, and is on the watch for faults, but he is a true friend with whom you dwell as a child at the breast of his mother; from such a friend none can ever divide you.

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* Reprinted from the "Oriental Department" papers, September, 1894.

THROUGH THE GATES OF GOLD*

THE most notable book for guidance in Mysticism which has appeared since *Light on the Path* was written has just been published under the significant title of "Through the Gates of Gold." Though the author's name is withheld, the occult student will quickly discern that it must proceed from a very high source. In certain respects the book may be regarded as a commentary on *Light on the Path.* The reader would do well to bear this in mind. Many things in that book will be made clear by the reading of this one, and one will be constantly reminded of that work, which has already become a classic in our literature. Through the Gates of Gold is a work to be kept constantly at hand for reference and study. It will surely take rank as one of the standard books of Theosophy.

The "Gates of Gold" represent the entrance to that realm of the soul unknowable through the physical perceptions, and the purpose of this work is to indicate some of the steps necessary to reach their threshold. Through its extraordinary beauty of style and the clearness of its statement it will appeal to a wider portion of the public than most works of a Theosophical character. It speaks to the Western World in its own language, and in this fact lies much of its value.

Those of us who have been longing for some thing "practical" will find it here, while it will probably come into the hands of thousands who know little or nothing of Theosophy, and thus meet wants deeply felt though unexpressed. There are also doubtless many, we fancy, who will be carried far along in its pages by its resistless logic until they encounter something which will give a rude shock to some of their old conceptions, which they have imagined as firmly based as upon a rock—a shock which may cause them to draw back in alarm, but from which they will not find it so easy to recover, and which will be likely to set them thinking seriously.

The titles of the five chapters of the book are, respectively, "The Search for Pleasure," "The Mystery of Threshold," "The Initial Effort," "The Meaning of Pain," and "The Secret of Strength" Instead of speculating upon mysteries that lie at the very end of man's destiny, and which cannot be approached by any manner of conjecture, the work very sensibly takes up that which lies next at hand, that which constitutes the first step to be taken if we are ever to take a second one, and teaches us its significance. At the outset we must cope with sensation and learn its nature and meaning. An important teaching of *Light on the Path* has been misread by many. We are not enjoined to kill out sensa-

* This review was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path* for March, 1887. The book, *"Through the Gates of Gold,"* has not been given much prominence by Theosophists in recent years but, as Mr. Judge indicates, it contains much of value.—[Ed. Theosophy.]

tion, but to "kill out *desire* for sensation," which is something quite different. "Sensation, as we obtain it through the physical body, affords us all that induces us to live in that shape," says this work. The problem is, to extract the meaning which it holds for us. That is what existence is for. "If men will but pause and consider what lessons they have learned from pleasure and pain, much might be guessed of that strange thing which causes these effects."

"The question concerning results seemingly unknowable, that concerning the life beyond the Gates," is presented as one that has been asked throughout the ages, coming at the hour "when the flower of civilization had blown to its full, and when its petals are but slackly held together," the period when man reaches the greatest physical development of his cycle. It is then that in the distance a great glittering is seen, before which many drop their eyes bewildered and dazzled, though now and then one is found brave enough to gaze fixedly on this glittering, and to decipher something of the shape within it. "Poets and philosophers, thinkers and teachers, all those who are the 'elder brothers of the race' —have beheld this sight from time to time, and some among them have recognized in the bewildering glitter the outlines of the Gates of Gold."

Those Gates admit us to the sanctuary of man's own nature, to the place whence his life-power comes, and where he is priest of the shrine of life. It needs but a strong hand to push them open, we are told. "The courage to enter them is the courage to search the recesses of one's own nature without fear and without shame. In the fine part, the essence, the flavor of the man, is found the key which unlocks those great Gates."

The necessity of killing out the sense of separateness is profoundly emphasized as one of the most important factors in this process. We must divest ourselves of the illusions of the material life. "When we desire to speak with those who have tried the Golden Gates and pushed them open, then it is very necessary—in fact it is essential—to discriminate, and not bring into our life the confusions of our sleep. If we do, we are reckoned as madmen, and fall back into the darkness where there is no friend but chaos. This chaos has followed every effort of man that is written in history; after civilization has flowered, the flower falls and dies, and winter and darkness destroy it." In this last sentence is indicated the purpose of civilization. It is the blossoming of a race, with the purpose of producing a certain spiritual fruit; this fruit having ripened, then the degeneration of the great residuum begins, to be worked over and over again in the grand fermenting processes of reincarnation. Our great civilization is now flowering and in this fact we may read the reason for the extraordinary efforts to sow the seed of the Mystic Teachings wherever the mind of man may be ready to receive it.

In the "mystery of Threshold," we are told that "only a man who has the potentialities in him both of the voluptuary and the

stoic has any chance of entering the Golden Gates. He must be capable of testing and valuing to its most delicate fraction every joy existence has to give; and he must be capable of denying himself all pleasure, and that without suffering from the denial."

The fact that the way is different for each individual is finely set forth in "The Initial Effort," in the words that man "may burst the shell that holds him in darkness, tear the veil that hides him from the eternal, at any moment where it is easiest for him to do so; and most often this point will be where he least expects to find it." By this we may see the uselessness of laying down arbitrary laws in the matter.

The meaning of those important words, "All steps are necessary to make up the ladder," finds a wealth of illustration here. These sentences are particularly pregnant: "Spirit is not a gas created by matter, and we cannot create our future by forcibly using one material agent and leaving out the rest. Spirit is the great life on which matter rests, as does the rocky world on the free and fluid ether; whenever we can break our limitations we find ourselves on that marvellous shore where Wordsworth once saw the gleam of the gold." Virtue, being of the material life, man has not the power to carry it with him, "yet the aroma of his good deeds is a far sweeter sacrifice than the odor of crime and cruelty."

"To the one who has lifted the golden latch the spring of sweet waters, the fountain itself whence all softness arises, is opened and becomes part of his heritage. But before this can be reached a heavy weight has to be lifted from the heart, an iron bar which holds it down and prevents it from arising in its strength."

The author here wishes to show that there is sweetness and light in occultism, and not merely a wide dry level of dreadful Karma, such as some Theosophists are prone to dwell on. And this sweetness and light may be reached when we discover the iron bar and raising it shall permit the heart to be free. This iron bar is what the Hindus call "the knot of the heart!" In their scriptures they talk of unloosing this knot, and say that when that is accomplished freedom is near. But what is the iron bar and the knot? is the question we must answer. It is the astringent power of self—of egotism—of the idea of separateness. This idea has many strongholds. It holds its most secret court and deepest counsels near the far removed depths and centre of the heart. But it manifests itself first, in that place which is nearest to our ignorant perceptions, where we see it first after beginning the search. When we assault and conquer it there it disappears. It has only retreated to the next row of outworks where for a time it appears not to our sight, and we imagine it killed, while it is laughing at our imaginary conquests and security. Soon again we find it and conquer again, only to have it again retreat. So we must follow it

up if we wish to grasp it at last in its final stand just near the "kernel of the heart". There it has become an iron bar that holds down the heart", and there only can the fight be really won. That disciple is fortunate who is able to sink past all the pretended outer citadels and seize at once this *personal devil* who holds the bar of iron, and there wage the battle. If won there, it is easy to return to the outermost places and take them by capitulation. This is very difficult, for many reasons. It is not a mere juggle of words to speak of this trial. It is a living tangible thing that can be met by any real student. The great difficulty of rushing at once to the centre lies in the unimaginable terrors which assault the soul on its short journey there. This being so it is better to begin the battle on the outside in just the way pointed out in this book and *Light on the Path*, by testing experience and learning from it.

In the lines quoted the author attempts to direct the eyes of a very materialistic age to the fact which is an accepted one by all true students of occultism, that the true heart of a man—which is visibly represented by the muscular heart—is the focus point for spirit, for knowledge, for power; and that from that point the converged rays begin to spread out fanlike, until they embrace the Universe. So it is the Gate. And it is just at that neutral spot of concentration that the pillars and the doors are fixed. It is beyond it that the glorious golden light burns, and throws up a "burnished glow." We find in this the same teachings as in the Upanishads. The latter speaks of "the ether which is within the heart." and also says that we must pass across that ether.

"The Meaning of Pain" is considered in a way which throws a great light on the existence of that which for ages has puzzled many learned men. "Pain arouses, softens, breaks, and destroys. Regarded from a sufficiently removed standpoint, it appears as a medicine, as a knife, as a weapon, as a poison, in turn. It is an implement, a thing which is used, evidently. What we desire to discover is, who is the user; what part of ourselves is it that demands the presence of this thing so hateful to the rest?"

The task is, to rise above both pain and pleasure and unite them to our service. "Pain and pleasure stand apart and separate, as do the two sexes; and it is in the merging, the making the two into one, that joy and deep sensation and profound peace are obtained. Where there is neither male nor female, neither pain nor pleasure, there is the god in man dominant, and then is life real."

The following passage can hardly fail to startle many good people: "Destiny, the inevitable, does indeed exist for the race and for the individual; but who can ordain this save the man himself? There is no clew in heaven or earth to the existence of any ordainer other than the man who suffers or enjoys that which is ordained." But can any earnest student of Theosophy deny, or object to this? Is it not a pure statement of the law of Karma? Does it not agree perfectly with the teaching of the Bhagavad-

Gita? There is surely no power which sits apart like a judge in court, and fines us or rewards us for this misstep or that merit; it is we who shape, or ordain, our own future.

God is not denied. The seeming paradox that a God exists within each man is made clear when we perceive that our separate existence is an illusion; the physical, which makes us separate individuals, must eventually fall away, leaving each man one with all men, and with God, who is the Infinite.

And the passage which will surely be widely misunderstood is that in "The Secret of Strength." "Religion holds a man back from the path, prevents his stepping forward, for various very plain reasons. First, it makes the vital mistake of distinguishing between good and evil. Nature knows no such distinctions." Religion is always man-made. It cannot therefore be the whole truth. It is a good thing for the ordinary and outside man, but surely it will never bring him to the Gates of Gold. If religion be of God how is it that we find that same God in his own works and acts violating the precepts of religion? He kills each man once in life; every day the fierce elements and strange circumstances which he is said to be the author of, bring on famine, cold and innumerable untimely deaths; where then, in The True, can there be any room for such distinctions as right and wrong? The disciple, must as he walks on the path, abide by law and order, but if he pins his faith on any religion whatever he will stop at once, and it makes no matter whether he sets up Mahatmas, Gods, Krishna, Vedas or mysterious acts of grace, each of these will stop him and throw him into a rut from which even heavenly death will not release him. Religion can only teach morals and ethics. It cannot answer the question "what am I?" The Buddhist ascetic holds a fan before his eyes to keep away the sight of objects condemned by his religion. But he thereby gains no knowledge, for that part of him which is affected by the improper sights has to be known by the man himself, and it is by experience alone that the knowledge can be possessed and assimilated.

The book closes gloriously, with some hints that have been much needed. Too many, even of the sincerest students of occultism, have sought to ignore that one-half of their nature, which is here taught to be necessary. Instead of crushing out the animal nature, we have here the high and wise teaching that we must learn to fully understand the animal and subordinate it to the spiritual. "The god in man, degraded, is a thing unspeakable in its infamous power of production. The animal in man, elevated, is a thing unimaginable in its great powers of service and of strength," and we are told that our animal self is a great force, the secret of the old-world magicians, and of the coming race which Lord Lytton foreshadowed. "But this power can only be attained by giving the god the sovereignty. Make your animal ruler over your self, and he will never rule others."

This teaching will be seen to be identical with that of the closing words of "The Idyll of the White Lotus": "He will learn how to expound spiritual truths, and to enter into the life of his highest self, and he can learn also to hold within him the glory of that higher self, and yet to retain life upon this planet so long as it shall last, if need be; to retain life in the vigor of manhood, till his entire work is completed, and he has taught the three truths to all who look for light."

There are three sentences in the book which ought to be imprinted in the reader's mind, and we present them inversely:

"Secreted and hidden in the heart of the world and the heart of man is the light which can illumine all life, the future and the past."

"On the mental steps of a million men Buddha passed through the Gates of Gold; and because a great crowd pressed about the threshold he was able to leave behind him words which prove that those gates will open."

"This is one of the most important factors in the development of man, the recognition—profound and complete recognition—of the law of universal unity and coherence."

THE RACES OF ANCIENT INDIA*

Mahabharata: Shantiparvan 6934.

Of the Brahmans, white is the color; of the Kshattriyas, red; of the Vaishyas, yellow is the color; of the Shudras, black.

There was no difference of colors; formerly all this world was put forth divine by the Evolver; it came to be colored through works.

They who were fond of love and feasts, fiery, warlike, fierce, undutiful, red-limbed,—these twice-born became Kshattriyas.

Those who relied on cattle for a livelihood, who were yellow, who lived by ploughing, who were undutiful,—these twice-born became Vaishyas.

Those who were fond of injury and unrighteousness, greedy, living by any work, black, fallen from purity,—these twice-born became Shudras.

Duty, in these verses, means the station in life to which it pleased the Brahmanical hierarchy to call the other classes.

* Reprinted from the "Oriental Department" papers, June, 1895.

ON THE LOOKOUT

This magazine was started in 1912 with the avowed object of promulgating Theosophy as it was given by those who brought it to the world. In the years that have gone by, the many articles written by H. P. B. and W. Q. J. for the help and guidance of the students have been republished and made accessible to those who want them. No more than a child in the world physical can the seeker for life in the world spiritual thrive and grow without constant effort on his own part and constant readjustment and aid from those wiser and stronger than himself. This growth is by "observation and experience." The profound meaning of the expression is missed by most. Experience—the self-induced and self-devised efforts of the individual soul is essential; but no less essential is observation—the benefit and benefaction of the experience gained by others. Karma is neither universal nor particular; it is *both*. So the phrase "observation and experience" is the expression of that binding Unity which unites all. No being, high or low, can "go it alone" either to heaven or hell. We either benefit or suffer by the associations we make, no less than by the resolutions we form from our experiences, and those associations are in very fact the net resultants of our past experiences and present determination, the two together shifting our future up or down.

Strictly in accord with the purpose of the magazine itself, and the magazine itself an expression of the United Lodge of Theosophists, the spirit of the Theosophical Movement was given further expression by the publication of "Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement," a light in the dark places of theosophical bewilderment. Next came "Conversations on Theosophy," a pamphlet containing much in little. Then Mr. Judge's renditions of the Bhagavad-Gita and Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms were once more made available for students. Next was reprinted the "Ocean of Theosophy." Of all these, thousands of copies have been distributed and their circulation, as well as that of this magazine, constantly grows. Promulgation, as distinct from proselyting or propaganda, has been rigidly adhered to. Devotion to the cause of Theosophy and loyalty to the Founders and Messengers of the Theosophical Movement has been the key-note of the activities of the Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists, as opposed to allegiance to any organization or leader or any concern with sects and parties, their dissensions or differences of individual opinion. *Magna veritas est et prevalebit.* The work grows apace.

Now we are happy to announce the reincarnation of two more works of the utmost value both to the inquirer and to the earnest student. They are the *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, and the *Echoes from the Orient*. The former may very truly be called rather the Bhagavad-Gita rendered and clothed in the thought, idea and expression of the present time, than a commentary. It makes the *Krishna* of the misty centuries of old, very near and very clear and very dear to the *Arjuna* of to-day, and who takes into his mind and heart these Notes will find the small old path at hand, accessible, companioned, not desolate nor hidden, nor his aspirations mocked or confused by the clamor of false prophets. Echoes from the Orient is perhaps of all treatments ever attempted the one best calculated to afford meaning and direction to those unknown voices of longing and inquiry which begin to rise in thousands of men and women of our day; longings and inquiries which only Theosophy can strengthen, feed and direct to the light that fails not. Its words are so simple, so true, so gentle and wise a cultivation of the first germinal impulsions to a larger life and truer living that we hope Echoes from the Orient may come to the attention of all those unnumbered thousands who need it. And this hope can come to fruition if all those students who have been helped and who are to be helped by it, will but take

it upon themselves to do by others as hath been done by them, and thus themselves become Messengers of the Masters by spreading Their Message. We become of Their company by what we give out, not by what we ourselves absorb. To absorb only to assimilate, to assimilate only to help others —that is the Path. "He who can, to any extent, assimilate the Master, to that extent he is the representative of the Master and has the help of the Lodge in Its work."

The opening article in the May *Atlantic Monthly* is a long essay by Winifred Kirkland on "The New Death." The writer notes that death, unavoidable as a fact, has always been shunned by the individual as a subject of thought and reflection, and her new death refers, of course, to the new attitude compelled by the present war. Death is now so present, so compulsorily imminent to myriads, that all who love and suffer the risks of love are bringing themselves to face the consideration of the meaning of death. The significance of the essay does not lie in anything said, for the author makes no pretense of knowledge, but rather in the fact that such an essay should be written and that it should find the leading place in the most intelligent of American magazines. Like babyhood, the significance does not lie in the intelligence of the child, but in the fact of birth, and in its possibilities. Once death is faced as a fact in nature the successive stages of attention to the fact will enlarge knowledge in quite the same way that knowledge grows in the child which steadily faces the fact of life and gives attention to its phenomena. Imagine a child born into the world which from the beginning and throughout its life regarded that life and its incidents as a mystery, as a miracle, as chance, as something taboo, not to be discussed, not to be thought of; to be shunned, to be denied meaning, relation, relevancy, understanding. That is our treatment of death. The ancients knew better than this, for they discriminated between That which suffers birth and experiences life and compasses death, and the Body in which these three incidents take place. They taught, as in the thirteenth chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita, a "meditation upon birth, death, decay, sickness, and error" as the means of discrimination between the Body which perishes and the Soul which is the immortal. The awakening souls to whom and for whom Miss Kirkland speaks are calling for that orientation and direction which Theosophy and Theosophy alone can give.

"Crusts and Crumbs" in the Toronto *Sunday World* continues its mild weekly theosophical apologetics by "Albert Ernest Stafford," a pseudonym for Mr. A. E. S. Smythe, well known to many theosophical students of a generation ago. The article of May 5th is in distant consanguinity to White Lotus Day, and perhaps because of that makes more than usual direct mention of H. P. B. and contains some quotations from her writings. It is curious to note how many students who owe whatever they may possess of knowledge to Theosophy, yet feel constrained to hedge whenever they speak of its teachings or of H. P. B. or Mr. Judge, and so drown whatever of truth they might impart in a sea of inconsequences and timid indirections of statement. Unless they are able to surround what they have to say with a mass of speculations of their own or drawn from the empiricism and empiricists of the day, they either keep silence altogether or give to their writings the appearance of dependence upon current religious or scientific speculation. One would almost think their own conviction of Theosophy to be based upon what is said about it rather than upon what Theosophy has to say. Yet not so was their own knowledge acquired, and not so was Theosophy made available to them. It remains true now, as thirty years ago, that "Theosophy is *sui generis,* is to be given as it is, is to be examined as it is given, if its real meaning is to be grasped, understood and applied." Constantly students whose ability and position is such that they might be of the greatest service to a wide audience, fall into the pitfall of presenting Theosophy as if it were to be examined on the basis of some per-

sonal psychological experience, or on the basis of the religious, scientific or philosophical predilections of the day. This attitude is natural and inevitable to the inquirer, each according to his environment, but for the actual student such an attitude of presentation is fatal, is a vacation and reversal of any possibility of genuine usefulness. To the inquirer Theosophy is a theory to be examined and considered in the light of his present education, experience, and sense of something lacking. But to the student Theosophy is or should be a statement of law in the light of which all things are to be studied. Any other position is "lukewarm," is illogical, is a confession that one is still of "doubtful mind" in regard to the very subject with which he is professing to deal.

Wrote H. P. B. in 1886: "Are you sure of having knocked at the right door? Do you feel certain that you have not lost your way by *stopping so often on your journey at strange doors, behind which lie in wait the fiercest enemies of those you were searching for?* Those who start on their journey *Eastward* should proceed by the straight road, without stopping on every sideway and path, seeking to join other 'Masters' and professors often of the Left-Hand Science." Her text was two students, earnest and sincere and devoted, who, after what *they* considered a sufficient degree of "study, mortification and rectitude" to entitle them to direct communication with Masters, turned to *séances,* psychic "practices." and other means of receiving "communications," when those Masters remained silent. The two students in question were not the first, nor by any means the last, who, displeased with the slow "results" accruing in the way of phenomena from the teachings of H. P. B., turned their attention elsewhere to quicker, easier and more productive means for gaining what they wanted. The history of all the theosophical and "occult" Societies and Esoteric Sections from that day to this is full of the efforts of eager students to break through the barriers. Spiritualism has been replaced by psychism, ethics by "practices," philosophy by "meditation," application by the ouija board and automatic writing, but the *fact* remains the same—Left-hand efforts to attain Right-hand results. Lodge, Crookes, Flammarion, Myers, Hodgson, James, Hyslop, Conan Doyle, and countless others see nothing more incongruous in necromancy rechristened psychic research than did Saul in applying to the "ghost" of Samuel through the witch of Endor. Why not? Saul got what he was looking for; why not they? The results *must* be "spiritual" since they are not physical. Elsa Barker and a host of other "theosophists" are getting "communications" from "living dead men," "Masters" and what not. It is not religious. It is not scientific. It is not material. *Ergo,* it *must* be "occult." The latest soul of theosophical repute turned into a torch for the *ignis fatuus* of necromantic mediumship is Ella Wheeler Wilcox. Twenty-five years ago she was a student of the writings of H. P. B. and Mr. Judge. For years she has been a well known writer for the press of articles flavored with theosophical nomenclature and ideas, calling herself a Theosophist and accepted as such by the world at large. Since the death of her husband, Mrs. Wilcox has announced far and wide that she is now "content, because *I know.*" She now has the "absolute proof" of immortality, because she has been receiving communications from her husband through the ouija board. Her "evidence under test conditions" is to be given to a hungry world through Mr. Hearst's *Cosmopolitan* magazine. Why should one consider the life and teachings of Krishna, or Buddha, or Plato, or Christ, or H. P. B., or undertake the pilgrimage in the path laid down by all the Predecessors, when the path of psychic research, of mediumship, of necromancy, of the ouija board is so much more facile, affords such quicker returns, and is equally spiritual?

"Immortality and a Personal God" is the name given to two letters appearing in a recent number of *The Outlook.* The writer of the letters signs himself "W." and addresses himself to "Dear Domine." "Domine," over the name of Lyman Abbott, answers—pardon, *replies,* to the letters in

editorial form. Answer to W. there will be none—in Christian Theology.

W. ought to have a real answer. His problems are real. He is facing life at its worst and is in the midst of death in the shambles of Europe.

Are we snuffed out when we die? Are we our bodies? Is there a God?

W. has read not altogether wisely, and too much. Through it all he has managed to preserve that feeling of immortality which is his birthright; but naturally, having the Western mind, his immortality ends at the beginning, and as there must be a time when it starts, he concludes that we pick up the eternal part at some point, but just *where* his reason has not told him. The question of memory bothers him because his scientist friends tell him that memory is a matter of brain cells only and if he is not to remember he's he, when parted from them, what is the use of being immortal?

He has some constructive thoughts:

> "We are sure, moreover, that the earth and all physical life which exists on it must one day vanish. Now is it rational to suppose that the earth's supreme result—personality—is going to vanish, too?
>
> "Can any rational mind picture a rational God or a rational universe which would amuse itself for a watch-tick by creating a dirt-ball, peopling it with strange beings culminating in man, inflicting upon man an infinity of miseries, diseases and uncompensated woes, developing certain of these men to magnificent proportions, and then putting its heel on the tiny affair, lighting a cigarette, and walking away?
>
> " . . . Nero . . . was just by comparison to the creator of a world without immortality . . .
>
> "Six months of transporting wounded and mutilated soldiers from trenches to hospitals definitely destroyed any incipient belief I might have had in a God who takes the slightest interest in the individual or to whom is due any of the affectionate worship implied in the word Father . . . . .
>
> "By all this I do not mean to say that I deny the existence of an infinite Power or Mind behind the universe. I simply mean that this Power so transcends human thought or imagination that it seems totally useless to waste time on trying to define or grasp it."

It is pitiable that W. has spent so much time on the blind alleys of thought: Ministerial ramblings; (by the way, what are gentlemen of the cloth going to do with their Theological overcoats? They might almost as well take them off; at present they seem to be in the position of wearing them because they won't feel them anyway. It is a little dangerous, Mr. Abbott, is it not, dangerously near to "pagan" doctrine, to admit God as a Universal Presence? However, Dr. Abbott and his ilk are safe in their obscurities. One might as well drive nails in a bowl of junket as oppose a logical argument against their inconsequential meanderings.)—Scientific speculation; that wolf in sheep's clothing, mis-called Spiritualism. Even H. E. Fosdick's worthy book, "The Assurance of Immortality," seems to leave some room for re-assurance despite the brave title.

There is not a question, not a doubt, in that fine, honest mind of W.'s that is not completely covered by the philosophy brought to the world by H. P. Blavatsky. It is sad indeed that millions of seekers are held back from the Truths contained in that philosophy by the half answers and half truths of their blind leaders.

One hopes that W. will find the true direction.

W. B. Yeats, whose fine Celtic nature has in it much that could have enriched the world, has, like Maeterlinck, been content to live and enjoy the sunlight of life at the expense of his genius. Coming nigh to the mistress of his dreams he has, like so many others, become so enamoured of the beauty of the goddess that he has forgotten the goddess herself. It is as if a caterpillar drawing near to the time of the heavenly transformation,

self-impregnated and self-immolated, spins her cocoon, and then—ah, then, looking one moment backwards, shuns the coming glory and sets to work to spin its investiture into a gorgeous web of fancy painted with all the exquisite pattern of a butterfly's wings, to the admiration of all beholding caterpillars and to the death of the transformation that might have been and that should have been. Mr. Yates has recently published a volume of essays, *Per Amica Silentia Lunae,* as beautiful as moon-beams, as illusive and as unsubstantial. They are as friendly as the silent moon, and, alas, as dead, as unproductive and as much reflected lights. When one remembers that Mr. Yeats was in his youth one of that promising band of Irish Theosophists and was near, very near, to the light "which never was on sea or land"—the light of true illumination—and sees him now, striving to keep aglow by setting fire to the last lingering memories of what might have been, one can but sigh. Isis was the goddess of the moon and many are the poor harpers who forsake Isis for the moon. This man, who once was near to H. P. B., has now no other memory of her than to recount how once H. P. B. said of a man of powerful imagination, but who thought the grave the end: "Now that he is dead he cannot throw off that imagination." Some such thought comes to us in regard to Mr. Yeats: once his imagination of genius brought him very near to Reality; now that he is dead he cannot throw off that imagination.

A Service Flag with three stars hangs on the wall of this office. Three members of the Los Angeles Lodge of the United Lodge of Theosophists are in the army of liberty: one of them already in France, another ready to go at this writing, having been in the Service for almost a year, and a third member was called late in May. These young men have met the situation calmly and even cheerfully, recognizing in it an opportunity to serve Humanity and fulfil the Law. Their letters breathe the very spirit of Theosophy and demonstrate how much the philosophy is meaning to them when put to the great test of time, life and circumstance. How many more Members of the U. L. T. are directly engaged in the great struggle we do not know; but we are sure that there must be not a few. This magazine is going out each month to soldiers in our own country, in England, in France, in Egypt and elsewhere—and we hear from them by letter from time to time. All of these men are grateful: grateful to Theosophy, grateful to the Teachers, grateful to those through whom they came into contact with the philosophy in this life. From none of them do we hear any complaints of any kind whatever. There is a chapter in the *Bhagavad-Gita* which begins, "Unto thee who findeth no fault I will now make known this most mysterious knowledge, coupled with a realization of it . . . " and it would seem that this statement has a particular application for those "warrior Theosophists" who are now engaged in the world's struggle for freedom, and who are so calm and uncomplaining about it all. Those who survive and come back to us again will bring a better and fuller understanding of the "mysterious knowledge" of life itself; those who "go out" will find an early incarnation "in a pure and fortunate family, or even in a family of those who are spiritually illuminated", as another *Gita* chapter affirms. They will have uncomplainingly made a great karmic readjustment and performed a service for all the rest. The good Law must then bring them compensation; and what greater compensation for a sincere and earnest student than a deeper and fuller understanding of the science of life, or an opportunity to acquire this? To all students in the Service anywhere THEOSOPHY sends fraternal greeting. We are doing what we can do, and all that we see to do, to help you and the cause in which you are actively engaged. If any of you see opportunities for theosophic service that we can meet, we hope you will let us hear about them as you can; for this is a war of *ideas* as you have recognized, and true ideas sown now wherever there is fertile ground in the minds of your comrades will bring a mighty harvest of brotherhood in that period of reconstruction when the war itself is won and the basis of the future civilization of the world is being laid down.